

ST. ATHANASIUS

THE LIFE  
OF SAINT ANTONY

# ANCIENT CHRISTIAN WRITERS

THE WORKS OF THE FATHERS IN TRANSLATION

EDITED BY

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NEWLY TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED

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## INTRODUCTION

The present volume contains the most important document of early monasticism, *The Life of St. Antony*, whose author is no less a man than the great St. Athanasius himself.

Antony, generally considered the father of Christian monachism or monasticism,<sup>1</sup> was born about the year 250 of well-to-do parents in Middle Egypt. If Sozomen's information is not confused, his home town was Coma.<sup>2</sup> His parents were Christians. Athanasius stresses that the boy was attached to them and to home life, finding school and companionship with other children distasteful.

He was eighteen or twenty years of age when his parents died, leaving him guardian of his younger and only sister. One day, about six months later, he happened to enter the church when he was struck by the reading of the Gospel in which the Lord speaks to the rich young man: *If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor; and come, follow me and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven.*<sup>3</sup> Applying this to himself, he went home and distributed his land—a fertile farm of more than two hundred acres—among the townspeople. He sold all his other belongings. He did not wish the goods of the world to hamper himself or his sister, and so he also disposed of the money received, giving it to the poor. Only a small sum was retained for his sister.

But once again as he went to church, he was moved by a lesson of the Gospel: *Be not solicitous for the morrow.*<sup>4</sup>

Taking this as another gesture from on high, he distributed the remaining fund to the poor. Placing his sister in the care of a community of pious women, he began to practice the ascetic life near his old home. At this time such life was not yet practiced in common, but one who desired to lead the perfect life went apart from the rest, and apart from any organization practiced it by himself. Near Antony's native village there lived an old man who had given himself to a life of asceticism from his youth. Drawn by his example, Antony left his home surroundings and observed carefully the ascetic practices of this solitary and of other men like him. He endeavored to imitate the special virtue of each, not in a spirit of pride or contention, but with the purpose of becoming a model ascetic in the eyes of God. Prayer was combined with fasting and manual labor, for his teachers in the ascetic life agreed with the Apostle who said that *he that is lazy, neither let him eat*.<sup>5</sup>

Later he departed to some tombs that lay at a considerable distance from the village. An obliging friend locked him in an empty vault and brought him bread from time to time. Athanasius reports (10) that Antony remained here until he was approximately thirty-five years of age,<sup>6</sup> in his solitude fighting off the temptations of the flesh and the attacks of demons. Because of his constancy the Lord promised him in a vision that He would be ever at his side in time of trial and make him renowned throughout the world. He left this retreat to move to the right side of the Nile to the "Outer Mountain"<sup>7</sup> at Pispir, where he occupied a deserted fort.

After living in his new solitude for a long time—St.

Athanasius states (14) that this period lasted twenty years—he was visited by friends who wished to copy his holy life. They broke down the door of his retreat, and Antony emerged, fresh and unchanged, and performing miracles and preaching the love of Christ. Many gathered around him to follow the ascetic life. He became their leader, teaching them constantly by word and example, fostering their zeal, and attracting still others to the ascetic life. From this period we have a long discourse (16-43) delivered by Antony on the vocation of the monk, the temptations of Satan and his powerlessness in the presence of recourse to prayer against him, and the gift, coming from the Holy Spirit, of discerning good and evil spirits.

At about this time we also find Antony at the head of a group of monks going to Alexandria during the persecution of Maximin Daja. His purpose was to offer himself for martyrdom, if the Lord willed it. He spent his time “ministering to the confessors in the mines and in the prisons.”<sup>8</sup> But to his grief it did not please God that he should die a martyr, and when the persecution had ended, he returned to his cell, to be a “daily martyr to his conscience, ever fighting the battles of the faith” (47).

While Antony was the recognized superior of the monks who had subjected themselves to him, he remained ever true to his eremitic vocation. He needed to be alone; and to be alone, he left Pispir and travelled for some days through the desert towards the Red Sea. When he had found a spring and some date palms, he settled there at the foot of a mountain. This was the “Inner Mountain,”<sup>9</sup> still known as Dêr Mar Antonios, where he cultivated a small garden and spent his time in prayer and meditation.

Charles Kingsley has this to say of Antony's new retreat:

The eastward view from Antony's old home must be one of the most glorious in the world, save for the want of verdure and of life. For Antony, as he looked across the Gulf of Akaba, across which, far above, the Israelites had passed in old times, could see the sacred peaks of Sinai, flaming against the blue sky with that intensity of hue which is scarcely exaggerated, it is said, by the bright scarlet color in which Sinai is always painted in medieval illuminations.<sup>10</sup>

From this retreat he was to make quite regular trips to visit and counsel his spiritual subjects.

And other recorded facts, too, show that Antony must not be thought of as one who immersed himself in his ascetic practices and the eremitical life to the exclusion of all else. Athanasius pictures him as going to Alexandria and publicly denouncing the Arian heretics and "Christ-fighters" (68-70). He did not refuse to enter discussion with the "Greeks," the followers of Neo-Platonic thought (72-80). The world beat a path to his cell in the heart of the desert, seeking cures of body and mind and soul; and, as they had done at Pispir, monks came to him for his sympathy and practical advice.

When he felt his end approaching, he wished to die alone on his mountain—the "Inner Mountain"—where he had spent so many decades of "daily martyrdom." After a brief farewell to the brethren on the "Outer Mountain," he went back to his retreat in the company of two monks, Macarius and Amatas, who lived with him because of his advanced age. He then made his last will and testament: his place of burial was never to be revealed by the two monks; further, to Bishop Athanasius he left a sheepskin and a cloak, gifts which he had once received from him; Bishop Serapion was to receive his other sheepskin, but

they were to keep the hair shirt for themselves (91). With a final blessing for them, he gave up his spirit.

When Antony died in the year 356 at the age of one hundred and five years, he was the recognized founder and father of monasticism. His original settlement at Pispir of monks who looked to him as their superior, had become the center of the solitary life in Egypt.<sup>11</sup> It was a school for asceticism, including such famous solitaries as Hilarion, who visited Antony in his youth and later helped spread the monastic life in Palestine;<sup>12</sup> Macarius the Elder,<sup>13</sup> spiritual father to several thousand monks in the desert of Scete; Amoun,<sup>14</sup> the founder of Nitrian monasticism; Paul the Simple, and others. As Dom Cuthbert Butler has said:

Whether in works which may claim to be history, or in the vaguer traditions enshrined in the *Apophthegmata*, or in the pure romances, a firmly set tradition ever looks back to Antony as the inspirer, nay even the creator, of that monastic system, which . . . had by the year 370 attained to vast proportions in Egypt and elsewhere.<sup>15</sup>

For the history of Egyptian monasticism during the fourth and fifth centuries we are dependent upon Palladius' celebrated record of monastic biographies known as *The Lausiak History*, and the various collections, in many versions, of "Sayings of the Fathers" (or Elders), called *Apophthegmata Patrum* or *Verba Seniorum*. We should also mention, among others, a third source, the anonymous *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto* (*History of the Monks in Egypt*), long thought to be an original work in Latin by Rufinus. The solution in great part of the baffling problems and riddles presented by this mass of literature was achieved by some of the most brilliant research

of recent times and is to be credited principally to the English Benedictine just mentioned, Dom Cuthbert Butler, and the German scholar, Wilhelm Bousset.<sup>16</sup> The constant recurrence of references to Antony and his teachings and to incidents in his life<sup>17</sup> indicates the high esteem in which his memory was held. If we were limited to these general works of monastic lives and traditions, we should have a very high opinion of the position he held in the development of monasticism in Egypt.

But it is fortunate, and also important for the development of monasticism in the West, that St. Athanasius turned his attention to writing a biography of Antony as early as 357, within a year after his death. The year 357 is generally accepted today as the date of composition of the *Vita*,<sup>18</sup> though the view of the Maurist editors that it was written at a later date, in the year 365, still finds support.<sup>19</sup> But modern criticism has concerned itself with the authenticity of the biography rather than the date of composition.<sup>20</sup>

The contemporaries or near-contemporaries of St. Athanasius never hesitated to ascribe the authorship to him. In 392 St. Jerome shows that he was acquainted with the *Vita*, both in the original and in the Latin version made of it by Evagrius<sup>21</sup> approximately thirty years earlier. St. Gregory Nazianzen remarks that Athanasius wrote a life of St. Antony in the form of a narrative.<sup>22</sup> Further, the Herodotus of the desert Fathers, Palladius, quotes an incident recorded in the life of the Nitrian monk Amoun and indicates his source, "The blessed Athanasius the bishop in his life of Antony."<sup>23</sup>

"Since the Reformation the general tendency of protestant writers has been to discredit, of Roman Catholics

to maintain the authority of the *Vita*." This statement by an eminent editor of the writings of St. Athanasius, Archibald Robertson, held quite true when it was written nearly sixty years ago.<sup>24</sup> Among the Reformers attacking the authenticity were the Magdeburg Centuriators, the Calvinist theologian Andrew Rivet, and the ex-Premonstratensian Casimir Oudin; on the Catholic side as defending the Athanasian authorship the names of Bellarmin and Montfaucon were the most conspicuous. In modern times the last serious attempt to deny the genuineness of the *Vita* was made some seventy years ago by the Breslau professor H. Weingarten.<sup>25</sup> Today no one denies that St. Athanasius is the author, and its unique importance not only for the development of monasticism, but for monasticism's earliest history is generally conceded.

One of the difficulties urged against the authority of the *Vita* also strikes the modern reader: the long passages representing discourses by Antony and setting forth a high degree of learning—on the theory of asceticism (16-43), on Greek philosophy, especially Neo-Platonism (72-80), and against Arianism (69). Against this it was urged that Athanasius states or intimates in several places in the *Life* that Antony possessed no book learning. It is even doubtful that he could read or write.<sup>26</sup> The most we can say regarding these sections is that they are both Antony and Athanasius: *equidem quid Antonio quid Athanasio tribuendum sit, vix diiudicari posse concedo*—as the learned critic of Weingarten put it.<sup>27</sup>

Athanasius meets rather well the requirements of modern historical criticism as far as the sources of his information go.<sup>28</sup> He had himself known Antony well, having spent part of his youth with him, probably before he

was ordained deacon in 318. Antony had visited him in Alexandria (71), and Athanasius had probably spent some time with him in the desert during one of his periods of exile. Further, the author indicates near the close of the Prologue that he has profited from information given him by one "who was his (Antony's) companion over a long period."<sup>29</sup>

If we accept the heading preserved in the ancient Latin version of Evagrius, the Prologue is addressed to monks in foreign parts—*ad peregrinos fratres*. This must refer to monks in the West who had apparently asked Athanasius to give some account of the life of Antony for their emulation. Athanasius had, of course, spent some time in the West on two different occasions, while exiled from Alexandria. His first stay was at Trier on the banks of the Mosel in 336-337.<sup>30</sup> The Eusebians forced him into exile a second time, and in March, 340, he set out for Rome.<sup>31</sup> Although in the following year he was exonerated by a Roman synod under Pope Julius, it was more than six years before he was free to return to the see of Alexandria. In the course of this stay he also came to Milan and revisited Trier. He had gone to Rome accompanied by a Nitric monk named Isidore. Palladius relates<sup>32</sup> how the monk became known to the Roman senate and the Roman noblewomen; and we have it on the authority of St. Jerome<sup>33</sup> that at this time Roman society became acquainted with the life of St. Antony and cherished admiration for the monastic life. The part played by St. Athanasius in introducing monasticism to the West is most significant.<sup>34</sup>

For his own part Athanasius was anxious to perpetuate the memory of his friend and teacher in the ascetic life.



We must not, however, judge the *Vita* as we should a modern biography. We should expect him to press into service, as he did in his apologetic works, his earlier rhetorical training in the schools of Alexandria. For his purposes he found in the classical Greek literature the literary type known as the *encomium*, exemplified by the *Agésilas* of Xenophon, which itself harks back to the earlier *Evagoras* of Isocrates, long studied in the schools and used as a model by the rhetoricians.<sup>35</sup>

Formally, it may be said, the *Vita* composed by St. Athanasius is an *encomium*<sup>36</sup> in that it gives us Antony's nationality, parentage, education, and youth, and enumerates his good qualities. However, the likeness ends here in that the ancient *encomium* had as its purpose the praise of an important figure in public life, and hence placed much emphasis upon his personal achievements, especially in the service of the state. Xenophon greatly admired the heroic Agésilas for his deeds and his ideal Spartan character—he saw in him the ideal of a good king.<sup>37</sup> Athanasius saw in Antony the ideal monk and wished to leave behind a literary monument to perpetuate his memory and to serve as a model for others, notably for such as sought perfection in the monastic life.

Modern critics have been quick to find another kind of literary model of the *Vita S. Antoni* in the *vitae* of certain philosophers.<sup>38</sup> Philostratus had written a biography of Apollonius of Tyana, Iamblichus—among others—wrote one of Pythagoras, and Porphyry composed a life of his teacher Plotinus. These biographical works portray the ideal philosophical sage in all his virtues and contain graphic accounts of the extraordinary deeds performed by the philosophers to prove their claim of occult knowledge

to their followers. St. Athanasius' *Antony*, it must be owned, contains a number of striking parallels to the life history given by Porphyry of his master. It may indeed be, as List is inclined to think,<sup>39</sup> that St. Athanasius was conscious of Porphyry's biography as he wrote the life of his desert hero, of the "unlettered" Antony who had not sought the fame of worldly knowledge and wisdom, who yet was sought out and respected by philosophers, among them followers of Plotinus, who laid claim to such worldly accomplishments. If any such tendency, of showing his hero superior to that of Porphyry, was in the mind of Athanasius, he certainly succeeded in that purpose,<sup>40</sup> though it was a very secondary one with him.

At any rate, besides the ancient classical models of biography, the newer type must have been known to Athanasius—that of the sage or the mystic, who drew great crowds of followers, not on the battlefield or in the affairs of state, but in the equally dramatic battle with self and the forces of nature. However this literary tradition may have served the inspiration and composition of Athanasius, he—consciously or unconsciously—inaugurated a third type of life story, the Christian biography. His hero, Antony, gains greatness not from the greatness of his deeds or his wisdom, but from the monumental greatness of his simplicity; from "uniting in himself in perfect harmony—renunciation and generosity, the love of solitude and the love of man, independence and humility";<sup>41</sup> from his great love of the Faith, his great love of the Church, his great mystical love of God. The ancient ideal type, the *hero* in the natural order, or later, the *sage* in the intellectual order, is here superseded by the *saint* in the supernatural order. The highest prototype of classical

antiquity, the *pious Aeneas*, was but a pale ghost beside Saint Antony who achieved what Socrates and Plato and Plotinus could only grope for in their highest speculation. The crowning achievement of Athanasius is that he combined the ancient literary forms of biography with the Christian element, and produced a type that was to influence all subsequent Greek and Latin hagiography.

There is a striking popular element in the *Vita*—the accounts of demons. While it is true that such material is less overwrought and less obtrusive than in many subsequent accounts of the lives of monks, still we sense that there is quite too much of it in the *Vita*: besides all the incidents of violent and strange encounters with Satan and his helpers, the long address (16-43) which Antony is shown as giving to his fellow monks and which takes up nearly one-fourth of the entire work, is almost in its entirety a discourse on demonology.<sup>42</sup>

No single or complete explanation of the great stress on this phenomenon is possible. Many factors enter here—the ancient inability to account for certain natural causes; the Christian conviction that the pagan gods and idols were in reality demons and that they plagued especially the Christians because Christianity was destroying more and more their dominance of the world; Gnostic traditions; certain occult influences which may have been more pronounced in antiquity than now and which we cannot quite explain even now; Athanasius' tendency to emphasize and aggrandize the heroic in his hero; his purpose to edify and to instruct his addressees—other monks and ascetics; the influence of similar accounts in other Christian literature, notably the popular “acts of martyrdom” (*acta martyrum*).<sup>43</sup> Allowing that these and other con-

siderations may fall short of explaining satisfactorily the role that demons play in Antony's life story, careful reading of his experiences and counsels also reveals many sane and acute observations made by him in the realm of the psychological and of the spiritual life.<sup>44</sup>

The *Life of St. Antony* enjoyed a tremendous popularity in ancient times and through the Middle Ages. It was read in faraway Gaul less than twenty years after it was written.<sup>45</sup> Probably at the instance of St. Jerome,<sup>46</sup> Evagrius translated or paraphrased it into Latin while he was still a presbyter, about the year 370. It served as the literary forerunner of Jerome's lives of Paul and Hilarion. St. Augustine tells us in the *Confessions* that it was one of the deciding influences in his own conversion.<sup>47</sup> Ponticianus, who recounted the life of Antony to him, probably had it in the Latin version of Evagrius.<sup>48</sup> In fact, as time went on, the Evagrian version enjoyed an existence and fame quite apart from the Greek original. Later, in the thirteenth century, it was incorporated, in somewhat abbreviated form, into the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus de Voragine. In succeeding centuries this edition of it served as the source of many vernacular translations in Western Europe. Further, it was largely through this medium that the story of St. Antony kindled the inspiration of artists.<sup>49</sup> Sculptors and painters have represented numerous scenes from the *Life of St. Antony* in wood and metal, in oils and stained glass.<sup>50</sup> The temptation of St. Antony particularly recommended itself to artistic treatment, allowing as it did, free scope to the imagination. In more recent times it provided Flaubert with the title to one of his works.

Again, a Syriac version of the *Vita* was made very early, perhaps as early as the Latin by Evagrius.<sup>51</sup>

\* \* \*

The Greek text of the *Vita S. Antoni* which appeared in the celebrated Benedictine edition by Bernard de Montfaucon in Paris, 1698, has never been superseded. This as reprinted in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* 26 (1887) 835-976 (published separately by A. F. Maunoury, Paris 1887, 1890), has served as the text for the present translation.

The following modern translations have also been consulted:

Clarus, L., *Das Leben des heiligen Antonius von Athanasius dem Grossen* (Münster i. W. 1857).

Ellershaw, H., *Life of Antony*, in *Select Writings and Letters of Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria*, edited by A. Robertson (A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Second Series 4, New York-Oxford-London 1892) 195-221.

Lavaud, B., *Antoine le Grand, père des moines. Sa vie par saint Athanase et autres textes* (Lyon 1943).

McLaughlin, Dom J. B., *St. Antony the Hermit by St. Athanasius* (New York 1924).

Mertel, H., *Des heiligen Athanasius Leben des heiligen Antonius*, in *Des heiligen Athanasius ausgewählte Schriften* 2 (Bibliothek der Kirchenväter 31, Munich 1917) 676-777.<sup>52</sup>



## PROLOGUE

### ATHANASIUS THE BISHOP TO THE BRETHREN IN FOREIGN PARTS <sup>1</sup>

The rivalry you have entered on with the monks in Egypt is excellent, determined as you are to equal or even to surpass them in your practice of the ascetic life. In fact, by now there are monasteries in your country too and the name of "monk" has established itself. This your purpose is praiseworthy indeed, and may your prayers prevail upon God to fulfill it!

Now, you have also asked me for an account of the life of the blessed Antony: you would like to learn how he came to practice asceticism, what he was previous to this, what his death was like, and whether everything said about him is true. You have in mind to model your lives after his life of zeal. I am very happy to accede to your request, for I, too, derive real profit and help from the mere recollection of Antony; <sup>2</sup> and I feel that you also, once you have heard the story, will not merely admire the man but will wish to emulate his resolution as well. Really, for monks the life of Antony is an ideal pattern of the ascetical life.

So, do not disbelieve the reports you have received from others concerning him, but be assured that you have heard very little from them. Indeed, they have scarcely told you all when there is so much to tell; and when I, too, whatever I may convey to you by letter at your request, shall

be giving you only a few of the recollections I have of him. You on your part must not cease to make enquiries of all voyagers arriving from here. Thus perhaps as each tells what he knows, an account will be had that does approximate justice to him.<sup>3</sup>

Well, when I received your letter I wanted to send for some of the monks, especially those who used to associate with him most closely. Thus I might have learned additional details and sent you a fuller account. But the sailing season is about over and the postman is growing impatient; therefore, I make haste to write to Your Reverence what I myself know—for I have seen him often—and whatever I was able to learn from him who was his companion over a long period and poured water on his hands.<sup>4</sup> Throughout I have been scrupulously considerate of the truth: I wanted no one to refuse credence because what he heard was too much, nor, again, to make light of the man because he did not learn enough about him.

#### BIRTH AND YOUTH OF ANTONY

1. Antony was an Egyptian by birth.<sup>5</sup> His parents were of good stock and well-to-do; and because they were Christians he himself was brought up a Christian. As a child he lived with his parents, knowing nothing but them and his home; and when he grew to be a boy and was advancing in age, he did not take to schooling,<sup>6</sup> desiring to shun even the companionship of other children: his one desire was, as the Scripture states concerning Jacob,<sup>7</sup> to lead a simple life at home. Of course, he attended church<sup>8</sup> with his parents; and here he did not show the disinterest



of a child nor youth's contempt for such things. No, obeying his parents, he paid attention to the lessons that were read, and carefully kept in his heart the profit he gleaned from them. Again, notwithstanding the easy circumstances in which he lived as a boy, he never importuned his parents for fancy and rich food, nor did he take any pleasure in such. He was satisfied with what was put before him, and asked no more.

#### ANTONY'S CALL AND HIS FIRST STEPS IN ASCETICISM

2. Upon his parents' death he was left alone with an only sister who was very young. He was about eighteen or twenty years old at the time and took care of the house and his sister. Less than six months had passed since his parents' death when, as usual, he chanced to be on his way to church. As he was walking along, he collected his thoughts and reflected how the Apostles left everything and followed the Savior; <sup>9</sup> also how the people in Acts sold what they had and laid it at the feet of the Apostles for distribution among the needy; <sup>10</sup> and what great hope is laid up in Heaven for such as these.<sup>11</sup> With these thoughts in his mind he entered the church. And it so happened that the Gospel was being read at that moment and he heard the passage in which the Lord says to the rich man: *If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor; and come, follow me and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven.*<sup>12</sup> As though God had put him in mind of the saints and as though the reading had been directed especially to him,<sup>13</sup> Antony immediately left the

church and gave to the townspeople the property he had from his forebears—three hundred *arurae*,<sup>14</sup> very fertile and beautiful to see. He did not want it to encumber himself or his sister in any way whatever. He sold all the rest, the chattels they had, and gave the tidy sum he received to the poor, keeping back only a little for his sister.

3. But once again as he entered the church, he heard the Lord saying in the Gospel: *Be not solicitous for the morrow*.<sup>15</sup> He could not bear to wait longer, but went out and distributed those things also to the poor.<sup>16</sup> His sister he placed with known and trusted virgins, giving her to the nuns<sup>17</sup> to be brought up. Then he himself devoted all his time to ascetic living, intent on himself and living a life of self-denial, near his own house. For there were not yet so many monasteries in Egypt, and no monk even knew of the faraway desert. Whoever wished to concern himself with his own destiny practiced asceticism by himself not far from his own village.

Now, at that time there was in the next village an old man who had lived the ascetic life in solitude from his youth. When Antony saw him, he was *zealous for that which is good*;<sup>18</sup> and he promptly began to stay in the vicinity of the town. Then, if he heard of a zealous soul anywhere, like a wise bee he left to search him out, nor did he return home before he had seen him; and only when he had received from him, as it were, provisions for his journey to virtue, did he go back.

There, then, he spent the time of his initiation and made good his determination not to return to the house of his fathers nor to think about his relatives, but to devote all his affections and all his energy to the continued prac-

tice of the ascetic life. He did manual labor,<sup>19</sup> for he had heard that *he that is lazy, neither let him eat.*<sup>20</sup> Some of his earnings he spent for bread and some he gave to the poor. He prayed constantly, having learnt that we must pray in private<sup>21</sup> without cease.<sup>22</sup> Again, he was so attentive at the reading of the Scripture lessons that nothing escaped him: he retained everything<sup>23</sup> and so his memory served him in place of books.

4. Thus lived Antony and he was loved by all. He, in turn, subjected himself in all sincerity to the pious men whom he visited and made it his endeavor to learn for his own benefit just how each was superior to him in zeal and ascetic practice.<sup>24</sup> He observed the graciousness of one, the earnestness at prayer in another; studied the even temper of one and the kindheartedness of another; fixed his attention on the vigils kept by one and on the studies pursued by another; admired one for his patient endurance, another for his fasting and sleeping on the ground; watched closely this man's meekness and the forbearance shown by another; and in one and all alike he marked especially devotion to Christ and the love they had for one another.<sup>25</sup>

Having thus taken his fill, he would return to his own place of asceticism. Then he assimilated in himself what he had obtained from each and devoted all his energies to realizing in himself the virtues of all.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, he had no quarrels with anyone of his own age, excepting this that he would not be second to them in the better things; and this he did in such a way that no one was hurt in his feelings, but they, too, rejoiced on his account. And so all the villagers and the good men with whom he associated

saw what kind of a man he was and they called him "God's Friend"; and they were fond of him as a son or as a brother.

### EARLY CONFLICTS WITH DEMONS

5. But the Devil, the hater and envier of good,<sup>27</sup> could not bear to see such resolution in a young man, but set about employing his customary tactics also against him.<sup>28</sup> p. 109 First, he tried to make him desert the ascetic life by putting him in mind of his property, the care of his sister, the attachments of kindred, the love of money, the love of fame, the myriad pleasures of eating, and all the other amenities of life. Finally, he represented to him the austerity and all the toil that go with virtue, suggesting that the body is weak and time is long. In short, he raised up in his mind a great dust cloud of arguments, intending to make him abandon his set purpose.

The Enemy saw, however, that he was powerless in the face of Antony's determination and that it was rather he who was being bested because of the man's steadfastness and vanquished by his solid faith and routed by Antony's constant prayer. He then put his trust in the weapons that are *in the navel of his own belly*.<sup>29</sup> Priding himself in these—for they are his choice snare against the young—he advanced to attack the young man, troubling him so by night and harassing him by day, that even those who saw Antony could perceive the struggle going on between the two. The Enemy would suggest filthy thoughts, but the other would dissipate them by his prayers; he would try

to incite him to lust, but Antony, sensing shame, would gird his body with his faith, with his prayers and his fasting. The wretched Devil even dared to masquerade as a woman by night and to impersonate such in every possible way, merely in order to deceive Antony. But he filled his thoughts with Christ and reflected upon the nobility of the soul that comes from Him, and its spirituality, and thus quenched the glowing coal of temptation. And again the Enemy suggested pleasure's seductive charm. But Antony, angered, of course, and grieved, kept his thoughts upon the threat of fire and the pain of the worm.<sup>30</sup> Holding these up as his shield, he came through unscathed.

The entire experience put the Enemy to shame. Indeed, he who had thought he was like to God,<sup>31</sup> was here made a fool of by a stripling of a man. He who in his conceit disdained flesh and blood, was now routed by a man in the flesh. Verily, the Lord worked with this man—He who for our sakes took on flesh<sup>32</sup> and gave to his body victory over the Devil. Thus all who fight in earnest can say: *Not I, but the grace of God with me.*<sup>33</sup>

6. Finally when the dragon could not conquer Antony by this last means either, but saw himself thrust out of his heart, gnashing his teeth, as Scripture says,<sup>34</sup> he changed his person, so to speak. As he is in his heart, precisely so did he appear to him—as a black boy;<sup>35</sup> and as though cringing to him, he no longer assailed him with thoughts—for he had been ousted, the imposter—but now using a human voice, he said: “Many a man have I deceived and very many have I overthrown; but now when I attacked you and your efforts as I have done with many others, I proved too weak.”

“Who are you who speak thus to me?” Antony asked.

The other was quick to reply with whining voice: “I am the lover of fornication. It is my commission to waylay the youth and seduce them to this, and I am called the spirit of fornication. How many have I not deceived who were determined to keep their senses! How many chaste persons have I not seduced by my cajoleries! Incidentally, I am the one on whose account the Prophet reproaches the fallen, saying: *You were deceived by the spirit of fornication.*”<sup>36</sup> Yes, it was I that tripped them up. I am the one who gave you so much trouble and as often was vanquished by you.”

Antony then gave thanks to the Lord and taking courage against him, said: “Well then, you are quite despicable; you are black in your soul and you are as weak as a child. For the future you cause me no worry at all, for *the Lord is my helper and I will despise my enemies.*”<sup>37</sup> Hearing this, the Black One fled at once, cowering at his words and fearing to even come near the man.

7. This was Antony’s first victory over the Devil; rather, let me say that this singular success in Antony was the Savior’s, who *condemned sin in the flesh that the justification of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit.*<sup>38</sup> Now, Antony did not grow careless and take too much for granted with himself, merely because the demon had been brought to his knees; nor did the Enemy, worsted as he was in the conflict, cease to lie in wait for him. He kept going around again like a lion<sup>39</sup> seeking a chance against him. But Antony, having learned from the Scriptures that the wiles of the Evil One are manifold,<sup>40</sup> practiced asceticism in earnest, bearing in mind that even if he could not

beguile his heart by pleasure of the body, he would certainly try to ensnare him by some other method; for the demon's love is sin. So he more and more mortified his body and brought it into subjection, lest having conquered on one occasion, he should be the loser on another.<sup>41</sup> He resolved, therefore, to accustom himself to a more austere way of life. And many marvelled at him, but he bore the life easily. The zeal that had pervaded his soul over a long time, had effected a good frame of mind in him, with the result that even a slight inspiration received from others caused him to respond with great enthusiasm. For instance, he kept nocturnal vigil with such determination that he often spent the entire night sleepless, and this not only once, but many times to their admiration. Again, he ate but once a day, after sunset; indeed, sometimes only every other day, and frequently only every fourth day did he partake of food. His food was bread and salt; his drink, water only. Meat and wine we need not even mention, for no such thing could be found with the other ascetics either. He was content to sleep on a rush mat, though as a rule he lay down on the bare ground. He deprecated the use of oil for the skin, saying that young men should practice asceticism in real earnest and not go for the things that enervate the body; rather they should accustom it to hard work, bearing in mind the words of the Apostle: *When I am weak, then am I powerful.*<sup>42</sup> It was a dictum of his that the soul's energy thrives when the body's desires are feeblest.

He further held to the following truly remarkable conviction: he thought he should appraise his progress in virtue and his consequent withdrawal from the world not by any length of time spent in them, but by his attach-

degree of

ment and devotion to them. Accordingly, he gave no thought to the passage of time, but day by day, as though he were just beginning the ascetic life, he made greater effort toward perfection. He kept repeating to himself the words of Paul: *Forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching out to the things that are before,*<sup>43</sup> remembering, too, the voice of Elias the Prophet saying: *The Lord liveth, in whose sight I stand this day.*<sup>44</sup> He observed that when he said "*this day*," he was not counting the time that was past, but as though constantly beginning anew, he worked hard each day to make of himself such as one should be to appear before God—pure of heart and ready to follow His will and none other. And he used to say to himself that the life led by the great Elias should serve the ascetic as a mirror in which always to study his own life.

#### ANTONY'S LIFE IN THE TOMBS. FURTHER STRUGGLES WITH DEMONS

8. So did Antony master himself. Then he left for the tombs which lay at some distance from the village. He had requested one of his acquaintances to bring him bread at long intervals. He then entered one of the tombs, the man mentioned locked the door on him, and he remained alone within. This was too much for the Enemy to bear, indeed, he feared that presently he would fill the desert too with his asceticism. So he came one night with a great number of demons and lashed him so unmercifully that he lay on the ground speechless from the pain. He maintained that the pain was so severe that the blows could not have



been inflicted by any man and cause such agony. By God's Providence—for the Lord does not overlook those who hope in Him—his acquaintance came by next day with the bread for him. When he opened the door and saw him lying on the ground as though dead, he lifted him up and carried him to the village church and laid him upon the floor. Many of his kinsfolk and the people from the village sat around Antony as round a corpse. But about midnight he regained consciousness and awoke. When he saw that all were asleep and that his friend alone was awake, he beckoned him to his side and asked him to lift him up again and carry him back to the tombs without waking anyone.

9. So the man carried him back and the door was locked as before and once more he was alone within. Because of the blows received he was too feeble to stand, so he prayed lying down. His prayer finished, he called out with a shout: "Here am I, Antony. I am not cowed by your blows, and even though you should give me more, nothing shall separate me from the love of Christ."<sup>46</sup> Then he began to sing: *If camps shall stand against me, my heart shall not fear.*<sup>47</sup>

So thought and spoke the ascetic, but the hater of good, the Enemy, marvelled that after all the blows he had the courage to come back, called together his dogs,<sup>48</sup> and bursting with rage, said: "You see that we have not stopped this fellow, neither by the spirit of fornication nor by blows; on the contrary, he even challenges us. Let us go after him in another way."

Well, the role of an evildoer is easy for the Devil. That night, therefore, they made such a din that the whole

place seemed to be shaken by an earthquake. It was as though demons were breaking through the four walls of the little chamber and bursting through them in the forms of beasts and reptiles. All at once the place was filled with the phantoms of lions, bears, leopards, bulls, and of serpents, asps, and scorpions, and of wolves; and each moved according to the shape it had assumed. The lion roared, ready to spring upon him, the bull appeared about to gore him through, the serpent writhed without quite reaching him, the wolf was rushing straight at him; and the noises emitted simultaneously by all the apparitions were frightful and the fury shown was fierce.

Antony, pummelled and goaded by them, felt even severer pain in his body; yet he lay there fearless and all the more alert in spirit. He groaned, it is true, because of the pain that racked his body, but his mind was master of the situation, and as if to mock them, he said: "If you had any power in you, it would have been enough for just one of you to come; but the Lord has taken your strength away, and so you are trying, if possible, to scare me out of my wits by your numbers. It is a sign of your helplessness that you ape the forms of brutes." Again he made bold to say: "If you can, and have received power against me, do not delay, but up and at me! If you cannot, why excite yourselves to no purpose? For faith in our Lord is a seal to us and a wall of safety." So, after trying many ruses, they gnashed their teeth against him, because they were only fooling themselves and not him.

10. And here again the Lord was not forgetful of Antony's struggle, but came to help him. For he looked up and saw as it were the roof opening and a beam of light

coming down to him. The demons suddenly were gone and the pain in his body ceased at once and the building was restored to its former condition. Antony, perceiving that help had come, breathed more freely and felt relieved of his pains. And he asked the vision: "Where were you? Why did you not appear at the beginning to stop my pains?"

And a voice came to him: "Antony, I was right here, but I waited to see you in action. And now, because you held out and did not surrender,<sup>49</sup> I will ever be your helper and I will make you renowned everywhere."<sup>50</sup>

Hearing this, he arose and prayed; and he was so strengthened that he felt his body more vigorous than before. He was at this time about thirty-five years old.

#### HE CROSSES THE NILE. LIFE IN THE DESERT SOLITUDE OF PISPIR

11. On the next day he went out, inspired with an even greater zeal for the service of God. He met the old man referred to above and begged him to live with him in the desert. The other declined because of his age and because such a mode of life was not yet the custom. So he at once set out for the mountain by himself. But there was the Enemy again! Seeing his earnestness and wishing to thwart it, he projected the illusion of a large disc of silver into the road. But Antony, seeing through the trickery of the Hater of Goodness, stopped, and, looking at the disc, exposed the Devil in it, saying: "A disc in the desert? Where does that come from? This is not a travelled highway, and there is no track of any people coming this way.

It is of great size, it could not have been dropped unnoticed. Indeed, even if it had been lost, the loser would have turned back and looked for it; and he would have found it because this is desert country. This is a trick of the Devil. You will not thwart my resolution by this, Devil. Let this thing perish with you.”<sup>51</sup> As Antony said this, it disappeared like smoke leaving fire.

12. Then as he went on, he again saw, not another illusion, but real gold scattered along the roadside. Now, whether it was the Enemy that called his attention to it, or whether it was a good power training the champion and showing the Devil that he did not care for even genuine riches, he himself did not indicate, and we do not know either, except to say that it was gold that appeared there. As for Antony, he was surprised at the amount of it, but he stepped over it as though it were fire and passed on without turning back. Indeed, he started to run so fast, that presently he lost sight of the place and it lay hidden from him.

So, having grown stronger and stronger in his purpose, he hurried to the mountain.<sup>52</sup> On the far side of the river he found a deserted fort which in the course of time had become infested with creeping things. There he settled down to live. The reptiles, as though someone were chasing them, left at once. He blocked up the entrance, having laid in bread for six months—this the Thebans do and often loaves keep fresh for a whole year—and with water in the place, he disappeared as in a shrine. He remained there alone, never going forth and never seeing anyone pass by. For a long time he persisted in this practice of asceticism; only twice a year he received bread from the house above.

13. His acquaintances who came to see him often spent days and nights outside, since he would not let them come in. They heard what sounded like riotous crowds inside making noises, raising a tumult, wailing piteously and shrieking: "Get out of our domain! What business have you in the desert? You cannot hold out against our persecution." At first those outside thought there were men fighting with him and that they had entered in by means of ladders, but as they peered through a hole and saw no one, they realized that demons were involved; and filled with fear, they called out to Antony. But he was more concerned over hearing them than to pay any attention to the demons. Going close to the door he suggested to them to leave and to have no fear. "It is only against the timid," he said, "that the demons conjure up spectres. You, now, sign yourselves and go home unafraid, and leave them to make fools of themselves." <sup>53</sup>

So they departed, fortified by the Sign of the Cross, while he remained without suffering any harm whatsoever from them. Nor did he grow weary of the contests, for the assistance given him through visions coming to him from on high, and the weakness of his enemies brought him great relief in his hardships and gave him the stamina for greater zeal. His friends would come again and again, expecting, of course, to find him dead; but they heard him singing: *Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Him flee from before His face. As smoke vanisheth, so let them vanish away; as wax melteth before the fire, so let the sinners perish before the face of God.* <sup>54</sup> And again: *All nations compassed me about; and in the name of the Lord I drove them off.* <sup>55</sup>

HE LEAVES HIS SOLITUDE. THE FATHER  
AND TEACHER OF MONKS

14. So he spent nearly twenty years practicing the ascetic life by himself, never going out and but seldom seen by others. After this, as there were many who longed and sought to imitate his holy life and some of his friends came and forcefully broke down the door and removed it, Antony came forth as out of a shrine, as one initiated into sacred mysteries and filled with the spirit of God. It was the first time that he showed himself outside the fort to those who came to him. When they saw him, they were astonished to see that his body had kept its former appearance, that it was neither obese from want of exercise, nor emaciated from his fastings and struggles with the demons: he was the same man they had known before his retirement.

Again, the state of his soul was pure, for it was neither contracted by grief, nor dissipated by pleasure nor pervaded by jollity or dejection. He was not embarrassed when he saw the crowd, nor was he elated at seeing so many there to receive him. No, he had himself completely under control—a man guided by reason and stable in his character.

Through him the Lord cured many of those present who were afflicted with bodily ills, and freed others from impure spirits. He also gave Antony charm in speaking; and so he comforted many in sorrow, and others who were quarrelling he made friends. He exhorted all to prefer

nothing in the world to the love of Christ. And when in his discourse he exhorted them to be mindful of the good things to come and of the goodness shown us by God, *who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all*,<sup>56</sup> he induced many to take up the monastic life. And so now monasteries<sup>57</sup> also sprang up in the mountains and the desert was populated with monks who left their own people and registered themselves for citizenship in Heaven.<sup>58</sup>

15. When the need arose for him to cross the canal of Arsinoë<sup>59</sup>—and the occasion was a visitation of the brethren—the canal was full of crocodiles. And simply praying, he went in with all his companions, and passed over unscathed. Returning to his monastery, he zealously applied himself to his holy and vigorous exercises. By ceaseless conferences he fired the zeal of those who were already monks, and incited most of the others to a love of the ascetic life; and soon, as his message drew men after him, the number of monasteries multiplied and to all he was a father and guide.

#### ANTONY'S ADDRESS TO THE MONKS (16-43)

16. Now, one day when he had gone out, all the monks came to him and asked to hear a discourse. He spoke to them in the Egyptian<sup>60</sup> tongue as follows:

“The Scriptures are really sufficient for our instruction.<sup>61</sup> Yet it is well for us to encourage each other in the faith and to employ words to stimulate ourselves. Be you, therefore, like children and bring to your father what you

know and tell it, while I, being your senior, share with you my knowledge and my experience.

“To begin with, let us all have the same zeal, not to give up what we have begun, not to lose heart, nor to say: ‘We have spent a long time in this asceticism.’ No, beginning over each day, let us increase our zeal. The whole of man’s life is very short measured by the ages to come, so that all our time is as nothing compared to eternal life. And in the world everything is sold at its worth and like value is bartered for like; but the promise of eternal life is bought for very little. For Scripture says: *The days of our life have seventy years in them; but if in the mighty they are eighty years and more, they are a labor and a burden.*<sup>62</sup> If, then, we live the full eighty years, or even a hundred, in the practice of asceticism, we shall not reign the same period of a hundred years, but instead of the hundred we shall reign for ever and ever. And though our striving is on earth, we shall not receive our inheritance on earth, but what is promised us is in Heaven. Moreover, we shall put aside our corruptible body, and receive it back incorruptible.”<sup>63</sup>

17. “So, children, let us not grow weary nor think that we are toiling a long time or that we are doing something great. For *the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that shall be revealed to us.*<sup>64</sup> Neither let us look back upon the world and think that we have renounced great things. For even the whole world is a very trifling thing compared with all of Heaven. Accordingly, if we should be lords of the whole earth and renounced the whole earth, this would again mean nothing as compared with the King-



dom of Heaven.<sup>65</sup> As though a person should despise one copper drachma to gain a hundred drachmas of gold, so he who is lord of all the earth, and renounces it, really gives up but little and receives a hundredfold. If, then, even the whole earth is not equal in value to Heaven, certainly one who gives up a few acres must not boast nor be careless; for what he leaves behind is practically nothing, even though it be a home or a tidy sum of money he parts with.

“We must further bear in mind that if we do not give up these things for virtue’s sake, later we must leave them behind and often, too, as Ecclesiastes reminds us,<sup>66</sup> even to persons to whom we do not wish to leave them. Then why not give them up for virtue’s sake so that we may inherit a kingdom besides? Therefore, let none of us have even the desire to possess riches. For what does it avail us to possess what we cannot take with us?<sup>67</sup> Why not rather possess those things which we can take along with us—prudence, justice, temperance, fortitude, understanding, charity, love of the poor, faith in Christ, meekness, hospitality? Once we possess these we shall find them going before us, preparing a welcome for us in the land of the meek.

18. “With these thoughts let a man persuade himself that he must not grow careless, and that all the more as he considers that he is a servant of the Lord and bound to serve his Master. Now, a servant would not dare to say, ‘Since I worked yesterday, I am not working today.’ Nor will he count up the time that has elapsed and rest during the days that lie ahead of him; no, day in and day out, as is written in the Gospel,<sup>68</sup> he shows the same

willingness in order that he may please his master and not incur any trouble. So let us also persist in the daily practice of asceticism, knowing that if we are negligent a single day, He will not forgive us for old time's sake, but will be angry at us because of our carelessness. So, too, we have heard in Ezechiel; <sup>69</sup> so also Judas because of one single night destroyed the toil of an entire past.

19. "Therefore, children, let us persevere in the practice of asceticism and not be careless. For in this also we have the Lord with us to help us, as Scripture says: *God co-operates unto good* <sup>70</sup> with everyone who chooses the good. And that we may not be careless, it is well to think over what the Apostle says, namely, *I die daily*.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, if we, too, live as if we were to die each new day, we shall not sin. As to the quotation given, its meaning is this: when we awaken each day, we should think that we shall not live till evening; and again, when about to go to sleep we should think that we shall not awaken. Our life is by nature uncertain and is measured out to us daily by Providence. If we are so disposed and live our daily life accordingly, we shall not commit sin, nor lust after anything, nor bear a grudge against anyone, nor lay up treasures on earth; but as men who each day expect to die, we shall be poor and we shall forgive everything to all men. As to lusting after women or other sordid pleasure, we shall not entertain such at all, but turn our backs upon it as something transitory—ever fighting on and looking forward to the Day of Judgment. For the fear of greater things involved and the anxiety over torments invariably dissipate the fascination of pleasure and steady the wavering spirit.

20. "Now that we have made a beginning and set out on the path of virtue, let us lengthen our steps even more to reach what lies ahead of us.<sup>72</sup> And let no one turn back as did Lot's wife,<sup>73</sup> especially since the Lord has said: *No man putting his hand to the plough and turning back is fit for the Kingdom of Heaven.*<sup>74</sup> And this turning back is nothing else than to feel regret and to set one's mind again on worldly things.

"When you hear virtue mentioned, do not be afraid of it nor treat it as a foreign word. Really, it is not far from us, nor is its home apart from us; no, the thing is within us, and its accomplishment is easy if we but have the will. Greeks go abroad and cross the sea to study letters; but we have no need to go abroad for the Kingdom of Heaven nor to cross the sea to obtain virtue. The Lord has told us in advance: *The Kingdom of Heaven is within you.*<sup>75</sup> Virtue, therefore, has need only of our will, since it is within us and springs from us. Virtue exists when the soul keeps in its natural state. It is kept in its natural state when it remains as it came into being. Now it came into being fair and perfectly straight. Wherefore, Jesus, the son of Nun, exhorted the people in these words: *Make straight your hearts unto the Lord God of Israel;*<sup>76</sup> and John: *Make straight your paths.*<sup>77</sup> For the soul is said to be straight when its mind is in its natural state as it was created. But when it swerves and is perverted from its natural condition, that is called vice of the soul.

"So the task is not difficult: If we remain as we were made, we are in the state of virtue; but if we give our minds to base things, we are accounted evil. If the task had to be accomplished from without, it would indeed

be difficult; but since this is within us, let us guard ourselves from foul thoughts. And having received the soul as something entrusted to us, let us guard it for the Lord, that He may recognize His work as being the same as He made it.

21. "Let us also struggle for this, that anger be not our master, nor concupiscence enslave us. For it is written that *the anger of man worketh not the justice of God*.<sup>78</sup> And concupiscence, *when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is completed, begetteth death*.<sup>79</sup> Living this life, let us be carefully on our guard and, as is written, *with all watchfulness keep our heart*.<sup>80</sup> For we have enemies, powerful and crafty—the wicked demons; and it is against these that *our wrestling is*, as the Apostle said—*not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places*.<sup>81</sup> Great is the number of them in the air around us,<sup>82</sup> and they are not far from us. But the difference between them is considerable. It would take us too long to give an account of their nature and distinctions, and such a disquisition is for others greater than we: <sup>83</sup> the one urgent and necessary thing for us now is merely to know their villainies against us.

22. "Now, first of all, let us realize this: that the demons were not made demons as we understand the term, for God made nothing bad. They, too, were created fair, but they fell away from heavenly wisdom. Since then they have been roaming the earth. On the one hand, they have deceived the Greeks<sup>84</sup> with vain fancies;<sup>85</sup> and, envious of us Christians, they leave nothing undone

to hinder us from entering Heaven: they do not want us to mount to the place from which they have fallen. Hence, too, the necessity of much prayer and ascetic discipline that one may receive through the Holy Spirit the gift of discerning spirits and may be able to know about them<sup>86</sup>—which of them are less wicked, which of them are more so; and what special interest each one of them pursues and how each is rebuffed and cast out. For their ruses and machinations are numerous. Of this the blessed Apostle and his followers were aware when they said: *For we are not ignorant of his devices.*<sup>87</sup> And we, drawing on our experiences with them, ought to guide each other aright, away from them. Hence I, having made this experience in part, speak to you as to my children.

23. "If, then, they see Christians in general, but monks in particular, working cheerfully and making progress, they first assail them and tempt them by continually placing stumbling blocks in their way.<sup>88</sup> These stumbling blocks are evil thoughts. But we must not be afraid of their waylayings, for by prayers and fastings and confidence in the Lord they are promptly thwarted. Yet, though thwarted, they do not cease, but return to the attack with all wickedness and cunning.<sup>89</sup> When they cannot deceive the heart by manifestly unclean pleasure, they change their tactics and march to the attack again. They then devise and affect apparitions in order to frighten it, transforming themselves and mimicking women, beasts, reptiles, and bodies of huge size and hordes of warriors. But even so we must not cower at these their phantoms, for they are nothing and quickly vanish, especially if a person fortifies himself with the Sign of the Cross.<sup>90</sup>

“Indeed, they are daring and exceedingly shameless. If here, too, they suffer defeat, they advance once more with new strategy. They pretend to prophesy and to foretell future events. They show themselves taller than the roof and burly and bulky. Their purpose is, if possible, to snatch off by such phantoms those whom they could not deceive with thoughts. And should they find that even so the soul remains fortified by its faith and the hope it entertains, then they bring in their chief.”

24. “And often,” he said, “they appear in such fashion; as, for instance, the Lord revealed the Devil to Job saying: *His eyes are as the appearance of dawn. From his mouth come forth burning lamps, and fires are shot forth. From his nostrils comes the smoke of a furnace burning with a fire of coals. His breath is coals, and flame proceeds from his mouth.*<sup>91</sup> When the chief of the demons appears in this way, the knave tries to terrorize us, as I said before, by his braggart talk, and that again as he was unmasked by the Lord saying to Job: *He esteemed iron as chaff, and bronze as rotten wood; he deemed the sea a vessel of ointment and the depth of the abyss as a captive; he judged the abyss to be a place for walking;*<sup>92</sup> and through the Prophet: *The enemy said: ‘I will pursue and overtake’;*<sup>93</sup> and through another: *I will grasp the whole world in my hand like a nest, and as abandoned eggs will I take it up.*<sup>94</sup>

“Such, in short, are the boastings they resort to and such the declamations they make in order to deceive the God-fearing. Here, again, we faithful need not fear his appearances nor pay attention to his words. He is only a liar and there is no truth in all that he speaks. When

he talks such stuff and does this with so much boasting, he overlooks how he was dragged with a hook like a dragon by the Savior, haltered around his snout like a beast of burden, and had his nostrils ringed like a runaway and his lips pierced through by an iron band. He has also been bound by the Lord as a sparrow for our amusement.<sup>95</sup> Both he and his fellow demons have been made so as to be trodden under foot like scorpions and snakes<sup>96</sup> by us Christians; and proof of this is the fact that we are now existing in spite of him. Indeed, note that he who proclaimed that he would dry up the sea and seize the whole world, cannot hinder our ascetic practices nor even stop me speaking against him. Wherefore, let us not pay attention to what he may say—he is a plain liar—nor fear his apparitions, for they are lies too. Indeed, it is not true light which appears in them, rather they are a mere beginning and semblance of the fire prepared for them; and it is with that in which they will be burned that they try ✓ to terrify mankind. They do appear, it is true, but disappear again the same moment, without harming any of the faithful, while taking with them a likeness of the fire that is to receive them. So here there is no reason either for fearing them; for by the grace of Christ all their tactics come to naught.

25. "But they are treacherous and prepared to undergo every change and transformation. Often, for instance, they even pretend to sing Psalms without appearing, and to quote sayings from Scripture. Sometimes, too, when we are reading they at once repeat like an echo what we have read. When we go to bed they rouse us to prayers; and this they carry on continuously, scarcely permitting

us to sleep at all. At other times again they put on the guise of monks and simulate pious talk, having in mind to practice deception by their assumed likeness and then to drag off the victims where they will. But we must not pay attention to them, even if they rouse us to prayer, even if they advise us not to eat at all, even if they pretend to accuse and revile us for what they once approved. It is not for the sake of piety or for truth's sake that they do this, but in order to bring the guileless into despair; and to represent the ascetical life as worthless, and to make men disgusted with the solitary life as something coarse and all too burdensome, and to trip up those who live such a life in spite of them.

26. "Hence the Prophet sent by the Lord called such as these unhappy in these terms: *Woe to him that giveth his neighbor a troubled drink.*<sup>97</sup> For such tactics and arguments are ruinous of the way that leads to virtue. Our Lord Himself, even though the demons spoke the truth—for they said truly; *Thou art the Son of God*<sup>98</sup>—nevertheless silenced them and forbade them to speak. He did not want them to sow their own evil along with truth; and He also had in mind to accustom us never to heed them even though they should appear to speak the truth. Then, too, it is unbecoming that we who possess the Sacred Scriptures and the freedom of the Savior, should be taught by the Devil, by him who has not remained at his post,<sup>99</sup> but has changed his mind constantly. Hence, He also forbids him to use quotations from the Scriptures, saying: *But to the sinner God hath said: 'Why do you relate my judgments and take my testament into your mouth?'*<sup>100</sup> Indeed, they do everything: they talk, they raise clamor,



they practice deception, they cause confusion—all to beguile the simple. They also din loudly, emit silly laughs, and hiss. If no one pays any attention to them, they wail and lament as though defeated.

27. "The Lord, therefore, because He is God, silenced the demons. As for us, we have learned our lessons from the Saints and do as they have done and imitate their courage. For when they saw such things, they made it their practice to say: *When the sinner stood against me, I was dumb, and was humbled, and kept silence from good things;*<sup>101</sup> and again: *But I, as a deaf man, heard not; and as a dumb man not opening his mouth; and I became as a man that heareth not.*<sup>102</sup> So let us, too, neither listen to them, regarding them as so many strangers, nor pay any attention to them, though they rouse us to prayer and talk about fasting. Let us rather attend to the practice of asceticism as resolved upon by us and not be misled by them who practice treachery in all they do. We must not fear them even though they appear to attack us and to threaten death. In reality, they are weak and can do nothing but threaten.

28. "Well, up to this point I have spoken on this subject only in passing. But now I must not shrink from dealing with it in greater detail: to bring this to your attention can only redound to your greater safety.

"Since the Lord dwelt with us, the Enemy is fallen and his powers have declined.<sup>103</sup> Therefore, he can do nothing; still, though he is fallen, like a tyrant he does not keep quiet, but threatens even if his threats are but words. And let each one of you bear this in mind, and he can despise the demons. Now, if they were bound to such

bodies as we are, they might then say: 'People who hide themselves we do not find; but if we do find them, we do them harm.' And in that case we could escape them by hiding and locking the doors against them. But since this is not the case and they can enter despite locked doors; and seeing that they are present everywhere in the air, they and their leader, the Devil; and if they are evil-willed and bent on doing harm and if, as the Savior said, *the father of evil, the Devil, is a murderer from the beginning*:<sup>104</sup> then, if nevertheless we live and live our lives in defiance of him, it is plain that they are without any power. For, as you see, place does not hinder their plotting, neither do they see us friendly to them, that they should spare us, nor are they lovers of good, that they should change their ways. No, on the contrary, they are wicked, and there is nothing they desire more eagerly than to harm lovers of virtue and worshippers of God. For the simple reason that they are impotent to do anything, they do nothing except threaten. If they could, you may be sure that they would not wait, but effect what is uppermost in their desires—evil, and that especially against us. Note, for instance, how we are gathered here and speaking against them, and that they know that as we make progress they grow weak. Indeed, if it were within their power, they would not let one of us Christians live, for the service of God is an abomination to the sinner.<sup>105</sup> And since they can do nothing, it is rather themselves they hurt, for they cannot carry out any of their threats.

"Further, this should also be taken into account to put an end to fear of them: if they had any power, they would not come in droves, nor resort to apparitions, nor would

they employ the device of transforming themselves. But it would be enough that one only should come and do what he is able and inclined to do; and, most important of all, anyone who really has power neither endeavors to slay with phantoms nor seeks to terrify with hordes, but without further ado uses his power as he wills. But actually the demons, powerless as they are, cut capers as if they were on a stage, changing their forms and frightening children by the illusion of coming in hordes and by the grimaces they make—all things for which they are the more to be despised as weaklings. To be sure, the genuine angel sent by the Lord against the Assyrians had no need of crowds, nor of visible illusions, nor of resounding blows or rattling noises; no, he exercised his power quietly and straightway put to death one hundred and eighty-five thousand of them.<sup>106</sup> But the demons, impotent creatures that they are, try to terrify, and if it be by mere phantoms!

29. "Now, if any one should ponder the story of Job and say: 'Why, then, did the Devil go forth and do everything against him? He stripped him of his possessions, killed his children, and struck him with a grievous ulcer,'<sup>107</sup>—let such a person realize that this was not a case of the Devil having the power to do this, but of God turning over Job to him to be tried.<sup>108</sup> Of course, he had no power to do it; he asked for it and did this when he received it. So, here again there is the more reason to despise the Enemy, for although such was his desire, he could not prevail against even one just man. Had the power been his, he evidently would not have asked for it; and the fact that he asked not once, but a second time, exposes his weakness and inability. Nor is it extraordinary that

he had no power against Job, when it was impossible for him to destroy even his herds unless God had acceded to it. No, not even against swine does he have power, as is written in the Gospel: *They besought the Lord, saying: 'Let us depart into the swine.'*<sup>109</sup> But if they have no power even over swine, much less do they have power over men made after the image of God.<sup>110</sup>

30. "Wherefore, one must fear God alone and despise those beings and not fear them at all. But the more they do these things, the more let us devote ourselves to asceticism to counteract them, for an upright life and faith in God is a great weapon against them. Indeed, they dread ascetics for their fasting, their vigils, their prayers; their meekness, calmness, contempt of money, lack of conceit, humility, love of the poor, almsgiving, freedom from anger, and, most of all, their loyalty to Christ. This is the reason they do everything that no one may trample them under foot. They know the grace given to the faithful by the Savior when He said: *Behold, I have given you power to trample upon serpents and scorpions and upon all the power of the enemy.*<sup>111</sup>

31. "Again, if they pretend also to foretell the future, let no one give heed. Often, for instance, they tell us days beforehand of brothers coming to visit us; and they do come. But it is not because they care for their hearers that they do this, but in order to induce them to place their confidence in them, and then, when they have them well in hand, to destroy them. Hence, we must not listen to them, but send them off, for we have no need of them. What is wonderful about that, if they who have lighter bodies than men,<sup>112</sup> seeing that men have set out on a

journey, outdistance them and announce their arrival? A person riding horseback could outstrip a man journeying on foot and give the same advance information. So, once again there is no need to marvel at them. They have no fore-knowledge of what has not yet happened,<sup>113</sup> but God alone knows all things before they come into being.<sup>114</sup> These, however, are like thieves in that they run ahead and announce what they see. At this very moment to how many have they made known our business, how we have gathered here and hold a discussion against them, before anyone of us can leave and report the same! But a boy fast on his feet could do the same, getting ahead of a slower person.

“What I am trying to say is this. If someone were to take to the road from the Thebaid or any other place, until he actually starts, they do not know whether he will go on a journey; but once they see him walking, they run ahead and announce him before his arrival. And it so happens that after a few days he arrives. Often, though, travellers turn back and their report is false.

32. “So, too, they sometimes talk nonsense in regard to the water of the River.<sup>115</sup> For example, seeing heavy rains falling in the regions of Ethiopia and knowing that the flooding of the River originates there, they run ahead and tell it before the water reaches Egypt. Men could tell it too, if they could run as fast as these.<sup>116</sup> And as David’s lookout-man,<sup>117</sup> mounting a height, got an earlier glimpse of who was coming than did the one who was staying below;<sup>118</sup> and as the man who ran ahead brought tidings before the rest, not of what had not yet come to pass, but of things already on the way to be reported and actually happening, so these choose to hasten and announce things

to others for the sole reason of deceiving them. Indeed, if in the meantime Providence were to make a special disposition in regard to the waters or the travellers—and this is quite possible—then the demons' report turns out to be a lie and those who put trust in them are deceived.

33. "Thus it was that the Greek oracles arose and thus the people of old were led astray by the demons.<sup>119</sup> But with this also goes the story of how deception was stopped for the future. For the Lord came who suppressed the demons along with their villainy. For they know nothing of themselves, but they see what knowledge others have, and like thieves they pick it up and misrepresent it. They practice guesswork rather than prophecy. Wherefore, even if they should sometimes hit on the truth in speaking of such things, even so a person must not wonder at them. Indeed, physicians, too, who are experts in diseases from having observed the same ailment in different persons, often make conjectures on the basis of their practice and foretell what will happen. And again, pilots and farmers, observing the weather conditions, forecast from their experience if there will be a storm or fair weather. But no one would say because of this that they prophesy by divine inspiration, but by experience and practice. Consequently, if the demons, too, sometimes guess at these same things and mention them, you must not therefore be astonished at them nor mind them at all. Of what use is it to the hearers to know from them days in advance what is going to happen? Or what point is there to eagerness to know such things, even if such knowledge prove true? Surely, — this is not the stuff of which virtue is made, nor is it at all a token of good character. For no one of us is judged by

what he does not know, and no one is called blessed because of what he has learned and knows; no, the judgment that awaits each asks this—whether he has kept the faith and faithfully observed the commandments.

34. “Hence, it behooves us not to make much of these things, nor to give ourselves to the toil of asceticism for the sake of knowing the future, but that we may please God by living well. And we should pray, not in order to know the future, nor should we ask for this as a reward for the practice of asceticism, but that the Lord may be our fellow worker in achieving victory over the Devil. But if we care some day to know the future, let us be pure in mind. For I feel confident that if the soul is pure through and through and is in its natural state,<sup>120</sup> it becomes clear-sighted and sees more and farther than the demons.<sup>121</sup> It then has the Lord to reveal things to it. Such was the soul of Eliseus seeing what went on with Giezi,<sup>122</sup> and beholding the armies standing nearby.<sup>123</sup>

35. “Now then, when they come to you at night and want to tell the future, or say, ‘We are the angels,’ ignore them, for they are lying. If they praise your practice of asceticism and call you blessed, do not listen to them nor have anything to do with them at all. Rather sign yourselves and your dwelling and pray; and you will see them disappear. They simply are cowards and deathly afraid of the Sign of our Lord’s Cross, since it was on the Cross that the Savior stripped them and made an example of them.<sup>124</sup> But if they persist even more shamelessly, dancing about and changing their appearance, do not fear them, nor cower, nor give them any attention as though they were good; for it is quite possible to tell the difference

✓ between the good and the bad when God grants it.<sup>125</sup> A vision of the holy ones is not turbulent, for *he shall not contend, nor cry out, neither shall any man hear his voice.*<sup>126</sup> But it comes so quietly and gently that instantly joy and gladness and courage arise in the soul. For with them is our Lord who is our joy, and the power of God the Father. And the thoughts of the soul remain untroubled and unruffled,<sup>127</sup> so that in its own bright transparency it is able to behold those who appear. A longing for things divine and for the things of the future life takes possession of it, and its desire is that it may be wholly united to them if it could but depart with them. But if some, being human, are seized with fear at the vision of the good, then those who appear dispel the fear by love, as did Gabriel for Zachary,<sup>128</sup> and the angel who appeared to the women at the holy sepulchre,<sup>129</sup> and the angel who spoke to the shepherds in the Gospel: *Fear not.*<sup>130</sup> Fear in these cases is not from cravenness of soul, but from an awareness of the presence of higher beings. Such, then, is the vision of the holy ones.

36. "On the other hand, the attack and appearance of the evil ones is full of confusion, accompanied by crashing, roaring, and shouting: it could well be the tumult produced by rude boys and robbers. This at once begets terror in the soul, disturbance and confusion of thoughts, dejection, hatred of ascetics, indifference, sadness, remembrance of kinsfolk, and fear of death; and then a desire for evil, a disdain for virtue, and a complete subversion of character. When, therefore, you have a vision and are afraid, if then the fear is taken from you immediately and in its place comes ineffable joy and contentment; and



courage and recovery of strength and calmness of thought and the other things I have mentioned, and stoutheartedness, too, and love of God, then be of good cheer and pray—for your joy and your soul's tranquillity betoken the holiness of Him who is present. Thus Abraham, seeing the Lord, rejoiced;<sup>131</sup> and John, hearing the voice of Mary, the Mother of God,<sup>132</sup> leaped for joy.<sup>133</sup> But when you have certain visions, and confusion overtakes you and there is tumult from without and earthly apparitions and threats of death and all the things I have mentioned, then know that the visit is from the wicked.

37. "And let this also be a sign to you: when the soul remains in fear, it is enemies that are present. For the demons do not take away fear caused by them as did the great archangel Gabriel for Mary and Zachary and he who appeared to the women at the sepulchre;<sup>134</sup> on the contrary, when they see men afraid, they increase their phantoms that they may terrify them the more, and then descend upon them and mock them, saying: *Fall down and adore us.*<sup>135</sup> In this way they deceived the Greeks, for among them they were thus taken falsely for gods. But our Lord did not permit us to be deceived by the Devil, when once He rebuked him for trying to pass off such phantoms on Him: *Get behind me, Satan; for it is written, 'The Lord thy God shalt thou adore and Him only shalt thou serve.'*<sup>136</sup> Therefore, let the Author of Evil be more and more despised by us, for what our Lord has said, that He has done for our sake: that when the demons hear like words from us, they may be driven off through the Lord who in those words rebuked them.

38. "We must not boast about casting out demons, nor

give ourselves airs because of cures performed; nor must we honor only him who casts out demons and hold in contempt one who does not. Let a man study closely the ascetic life of each, and then either imitate and emulate it, or else correct it. For to work miracles<sup>137</sup> is not for us. That is reserved for the Savior. Indeed, He said to the disciples: *Rejoice not because demons are subject to you, but because your names are written in Heaven.*<sup>138</sup> And the fact that our names are inscribed in Heaven is witness to our life of virtue, but as to casting out demons, that is the gift of the Savior who grants it. Hence, to those who were boasting not of their virtue, but of their miracles, and saying: *Lord, have we not cast out devils in Thy name and wrought many miracles in Thy name?*<sup>139</sup> He answered: *Amen, I say to you, I know you not;*<sup>140</sup> for the Lord knows not the ways of the ungodly.<sup>141</sup> In short, one must pray, as I have said, for the gift of discerning spirits, that, as is written, we may not put faith in every spirit.<sup>142</sup>

39. "Really, I meant to stop and to mention nothing coming from my own self, satisfied with what has been said. That you may not think, however, that I simply say these things, but may be convinced that I am speaking from experience and truth, for this reason I here recount what I have seen of the practices of the demons. I shall perhaps appear foolish; even so the Lord who listens knows that my conscience is clear and that it is not for myself, but out of my love for you and to encourage you that I do so.

"How often they called me blessed, while I cursed them in the name of the Lord! How often they made predictions regarding the water of the River and I said to them,

‘And what business is that of yours?’ Once they came with threats and surrounded me like soldiers in full armor. On another occasion they filled the house with horses and beasts and reptiles, but I chanted the Psalm: *These are in chariots and these are on horses, but we shall be magnified in the name of the Lord God,*<sup>143</sup> and at these prayers they were repulsed by the Lord. Once in the dark they came with an illusion of light and said: ‘We have come to bring you light, Antony.’ But I shut my eyes, I prayed, and at once the light of the impious ones was put out. And a few months later they came along chanting Psalms and quoting the Scriptures. But *I as one deaf heard not.*<sup>144</sup> Once they shook the monastery<sup>145</sup> from one side to the other, but I prayed, remaining unshaken in mind. Then they came again and made a continuous noise, hammering, hissing, and prancing about. But I prayed and lay singing Psalms to myself; and presently they began to wail and cry, as though completely exhausted; and I extolled the Lord who had brought to naught their brazenness and madness and taught them a lesson.

40. “Once a very tall demon appeared in a vision and dared to say: ‘I am the power of God’; and, ‘I am Providence. What favor do you wish me to bestow upon you?’ Then I blew a breath at him,<sup>146</sup> calling upon the name of Christ, and I made an effort to strike him. It would seem that I succeeded, and instantly, big as he was, he with all his fellow demons disappeared at the name of Christ. Once when I was fasting, the Crafty One came to me even as a monk carrying phantom loaves. He counselled me, saying: ‘Eat, and cease from your many hardships! You, too, are a man and you are bound to get sick.’ But I, perceiving his wiliness, arose to pray, and he could not

bear it. He left, resembling smoke as he went out through the door.

"How often in the desert did he show me a vision of gold that I might but touch it and look at it! But I would counter him by chanting a Psalm and it would be dissolved. Often they struck me blows, and I would say: 'Nothing will separate me from the love of Christ';<sup>147</sup> and then they would beat each other instead! But it was not I who stopped them and crippled their efforts, but it was the Lord, He who says: *I saw Satan like lightning falling from Heaven.*<sup>148</sup>

"My children, mindful of what the Apostle said, *I have applied this to myself,*<sup>149</sup> that you may learn not to lose heart in your ascetic life, and not to fear the delusions of the Devil and his demons.

41. "And, seeing that I have already made myself foolish by going into all this, take the following, too, to serve your own safety and self-assurance; and believe me—I am not lying.

"Once there was a knock at my door in the monastery, and going out I saw a tall, towering figure. Then, when I asked, 'Who are you?'

'I am Satan,' he said.

'What are you doing here?' I asked him.

He said: 'Why do the monks and all the other Christians find fault with me for no reason at all? Why do they curse me every hour?'

'Well,' said I, 'why do you annoy them?'

He said: 'It is not I who annoy them, but their troubles originate with themselves; for I have become weak. Have they not read: *The swords of the enemy have failed to the end and their cities Thou hast destroyed?*<sup>150</sup> I now have

no place, no weapon, no city. Everywhere there are Christians, and even the desert is already full of monks.<sup>151</sup> Let them mind their own business and not curse me without cause.'

"Then I marvelled at the grace of the Lord and said to him: 'Though you are always the liar and never speak the truth, yet this time you have spoken the truth, however you disliked to do so. You see, Christ by His coming had made you powerless and cast you down and stripped you.' He, hearing the Savior's name and unable to endure ✓ the heat it caused in him, vanished.

42. "Wherefore, if even the Devil himself confesses that he has no power, we ought to condemn him and his demons as well from first to last. The Evil One with his hounds, it is true, has all this store of knaveries; but we, having learned their weakness, can despise them. Let us, therefore, not give up and become despondent in mind, nor entertain cowardice in our soul, nor conjure up fears for ourselves, saying—'If only a demon does not come and trip me up! If only he does not lift me up and hurl me down, or appear suddenly and scare me out of my wits!' No, we must not have such thoughts at all nor grieve as though we were perishing. Let us rather be of good courage and rejoice always as men who are being saved. Let us ponder in our soul that the Lord is with us, He who put the evil spirits to flight and made them impotent.

"Let us think this over and ever bear in mind that as long as the Lord is with us, our enemies will do us no harm. For when they come, they conduct themselves as they find us; and in whatever state of mind they find us, so likewise do they represent their phantoms.<sup>152</sup> If they

see us panic-stricken with fear, they promptly take possession like robbers who find the place unguarded; and whatever we think of ourselves, this they pay out with interest added. If they see us fearful and fainthearted, so much the more do they augment our faithheartedness in the form of phantoms and threats, and thus the poor soul is tormented for the future. But if they find us rejoicing in the Lord, meditating on the good things to come and contemplating the things that are the Lord's, considering that everything is in the Lord's hands and that a demon has no power over a Christian, that, in fact, he has no power over anyone at all—then, seeing the soul safeguarded with thoughts such as these, they are put to shame and they turn away. Thus, when the Enemy saw Job fortified all round, he withdrew from him, but finding Judas bare of all this, he took him prisoner.

“Wherefore, if we wish to despise the Enemy, let us always keep our thoughts upon the things of the Lord and let the soul ever rejoice in hope.<sup>153</sup> We shall then see the trumperies of the demons as so much smoke and see them fleeing rather than pursuing. For they are, as I said, abject cowards, always apprehensive of <sup>154</sup> the fire which has been prepared for them.<sup>155</sup>

43. “And observe this, too, as betokening the fearlessness you should have in their presence. When any phantom appears, do not promptly collapse with cowardly fear, but whatever it may be, first ask with stout heart, ‘Who are you and whence do you come?’ And if it should be a vision of the good, they will reassure you and change your fear into joy. If, however, it has to do with the Devil, it will weaken on the spot, seeing your steadfast mind; for

to simply ask, 'Who are you and whence do you come?' is an indication of calmness. Thus did the son of Nave inquire and learn; <sup>156</sup> and the Enemy did not escape detection when Daniel questioned him." <sup>157</sup>

### MONASTIC VIRTUE

44. As Antony discussed these matters with them, all rejoiced. In some the love of virtue increased, in some negligence was discarded, and in others conceit was checked. All heeded his advice to despise the schemings of the Devil, and were in admiration of the grace given to Antony by the Lord for the discerning of spirits.

So, then, their solitary cells in the hills were like tents filled with divine choirs—singing Psalms, studying, fasting, praying, rejoicing in the hope of the life to come, and laboring in order to give alms and preserving love and harmony among themselves. And truly it was like seeing a land apart, a land of piety and justice. For there was neither wrongdoer nor sufferer of wrong, nor was there reproof of the tax-collector; <sup>158</sup> but a multitude of ascetics, all with one set purpose—virtue. Thus, if one saw these solitary cells again and the fine disposition of the monks, he could but lift up his voice and say: *How fair are thy dwellings, O Jacob—thy tents, O Israel! Like shady glens and like a garden by a river, and like tents that the Lord hath pitched and cedars beside the waters!* <sup>159</sup>

45. Antony himself went back as usual to his own cell and intensified his ascetic practices. Day by day he sighed as he meditated on the heavenly mansions, <sup>160</sup> longing for

them and seeing the short-lived existence of man. When he was about to eat and sleep and provide for the other needs of the body, shame overcame him as he thought of the spiritual nature of the soul.<sup>161</sup> Often when about to partake of food with many other monks, the thought of spiritual food came upon him and he would beg to be excused and went a long way from them, thinking that he should be ashamed to be seen eating by others. He did eat, of course, by himself because his body needed it; and frequently, too, with the brethren—embarrassed because of them, yet speaking freely because of the help his words gave them. He used to say that one should give all one's time to the soul rather than to the body. True, because necessity demands it, a little time should be given to the body; but on the whole we should give our first attention to the soul and look to its advantage. It must not be dragged down by the pleasures of the body, but rather the body must be made subject to the soul. This, he stated, was what the Savior said: *Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body what you shall put on. And seek not you what you shall eat or what you shall drink, and be not lifted up on high; for all these things do the nations of the world seek. But your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. But seek you first His kingdom and all these things shall be added to you.*<sup>162</sup>



THE CANDIDATE FOR MARTYRDOM UNDER  
MAXIMIN DAJA (311)

46. After this the persecution of Maximin<sup>163</sup> which broke out at the time befell the Church. When the holy martyrs were taken to Alexandria, he, too, left his cell and followed, saying: "Let us also go to take part in the contest if we are called, or to look on the contestants." Now, he had a yearning to suffer martyrdom, but as he did not wish to give himself up, he ministered to the confessors in the mines and in the prisons.<sup>164</sup> He was busy in the courtroom<sup>165</sup> stimulating the zeal of the contestants as they were called up, and receiving and escorting them as they went to their martyrdom and remaining with them until they had expired. So the judge, seeing his fearlessness and that of his companions and their zeal in this matter, gave orders that no monk was to appear in the court or stay in the city at all. All the others thought it well to remain in hiding that day, but Antony thought so little of it that he washed his clothes<sup>166</sup> and on the following day posted himself at a prominent place in front, in plain view of the prefect. While all wondered at this and the prefect saw it too as he came through with his staff, he stood there unafraid, showing the eager spirit characteristic of us Christians; for, as I stated before, he was praying that he, too, might be martyred. Therefore, he also appeared grieved that he did not suffer martyrdom.<sup>167</sup>

But the Lord was guarding him for our own good and for the good of others, that to many he might be a teacher of the ascetic life which he himself had learned from the

Scriptures. In fact, many from merely seeing his conduct were zealous followers of his way of life. Again, therefore, he followed his wont of ministering to the confessors; and as though he were in bonds with them,<sup>168</sup> he grew weary in his toil for them.

#### THE DAILY MARTYR OF THE MONASTIC LIFE

47. When the persecution finally ceased and Bishop Peter of blessed memory had suffered martyrdom,<sup>169</sup> he left and went back to his solitary cell; and there he was a daily martyr to his conscience, ever fighting the battles of the Faith. For he practiced a zealous and more intense ascetic life. He fasted continually, his clothing was hair on the inside while the outside was skin,<sup>170</sup> and this he kept to his dying day. He never bathed his body in water to remove filth,<sup>171</sup> nor did he as much as wash his feet or even allow himself to put them in water without necessity. No one ever saw him undressed, nor did anyone ever look upon his bare body till he died and was buried.

48. Now, then, as he returned to solitude and having determined to set himself a period of time during which he would neither go out himself nor receive anyone, a military officer, a certain Martinianus, came to importune Antony: he had a daughter troubled by a demon. As he persisted in staying, knocking at the door, and begging him to come and pray to God for his child, Antony would not open, but using a peephole, he said: "Man, why do you make all this clamor to me? I am a man just as you are. If you believe in Christ whom I serve, go, and, as you

believe, pray to God and it will come to pass." And the man left at once, believing and invoking Christ, and his daughter was cleansed from the demon. Many other things, too, did the Lord perform through him, He who said: *Ask, and it shall be given you.*<sup>172</sup> For very many sufferers simply slept outside his cell,<sup>173</sup> since he would not open his door to them; and they were healed by their faith and sincere prayer.

#### FLIGHT TO THE INNER MOUNTAIN

49. When he saw himself beset by many and that he was not permitted to withdraw as he had proposed to himself and wished, and concerned that because of what the Lord was doing through him<sup>174</sup> he might become conceited or another might account him more than was proper, he looked about and set out on a journey to the Upper Thebaid to people among whom he was unknown. He had received loaves from the brethren and was sitting by the banks of the River, watching to see if a boat should come along on which he could embark and leave with them. While he was thus on the lookout, a voice came to him from above: "Antony, where are you going, and why?"

He was not bewildered, but, being used to hearing such calls often, he listened and answered: "Since the crowds do not permit me to be alone, therefore I want to go to the Upper Thebaid because of the many annoyances I am subjected to here and especially because they ask me things beyond my power."

"Whether you go up to the Thebaid," the voice said, "or, as you have been considering, down to the Pastures,<sup>175</sup> you will have more—yes, twice as much trouble to put up with. But if you really wish to be by yourself, then go up to the inner desert."

"And," said Antony, "who will show me the way? I am not acquainted with it." At once his attention was called to some Saracens<sup>176</sup> who were about to take that route. Coming up and approaching them, Antony asked to go along with them into the desert. They welcomed him as though by the command of Providence. And he journeyed with them three days and three nights and came to a very high mountain. At the base of the mountain there was water, crystal-clear, sweet, and very cold. Spreading out from there was flat land and a few scraggy date-palms.

50. Antony, as though inspired by God, fell in love with the place,<sup>177</sup> for this was what He meant who spoke to him at the riverbank. He made a beginning by getting some loaves of bread from his companion travellers, and stayed alone on the mountain, with no one to keep him company. For the future he regarded this place as though he had found his own home. As for the Saracens, noticing Antony's enthusiasm, they made it a point to travel through by that road and were happy to bring him bread. Then, too, in those days he derived a small and frugal change of diet from the date-palms. Later the brethren, learning of the place, like children mindful of their father, saw to it that bread was sent to him. Antony, however, seeing that the bread was causing some of them to trouble themselves to the extent of enduring hardship, and mean-

ing to show consideration for the monks in this also, he thought the matter over and asked some of those who visited him to bring him a two-pronged hoe, an axe, and some grain.

When these were brought, he went over the ground about the mountain, and finding a small patch that was suitable, and with a generous supply of water available from the spring, he tilled and sowed it. This he did every year and it furnished him his bread. He was happy that he should not have to trouble anyone for this and that in all things he kept himself from being a burden. But later, seeing that people were coming to him again, he began to raise a few vegetables too, that the visitor might have a little something to restore him after the weariness of that hard road.

At first wild animals in the desert coming for water often would damage the beds in his garden. But he caught one of the animals, held it gently, and said to them all: "Why do you do harm to me when I harm none of you? Go away, and in the Lord's name do not come near these things again!" And ever afterwards, as though awed by his orders, they did not come near the place.<sup>178</sup>

## DEMONS AGAIN

51. So he was alone in the Inner Mountain, giving his time to prayer and to the practice of asceticism. But the brethren who looked after him asked that they might come every month and bring him olives and pulse and oil, for he was now an old man.

From those who visited him we have learned how many wrestlings <sup>179</sup> he endured while living there, *not against flesh and blood*, as is written, <sup>180</sup> but in conflict with demons. For there, too, they heard tumults and many voices and clangor as of weapons. At night they saw the mountain alive with wild beasts. They also saw him fighting as with visible foes, and praying against them. To such as visited him he spoke words of encouragement, while for himself he kept up the struggle on bended knees and praying to the Lord. And it was truly remarkable that, alone as he was in such a wilderness, he was neither dismayed by the attacks of the demons, nor, with all the animals and creeping things there, did he fear their savageness. But, as Scripture has it, he truly *trusted in the Lord like Mount Sion*, <sup>181</sup> with a mind unshaken and unruffled. Thus the demons rather fled from him, and the wild beasts, as is written, <sup>182</sup> kept peace with him.

52. So the Devil kept a close watch on Antony and gnashed his teeth against him, as David says in the Psalm; <sup>183</sup> but Antony was heartened by the Savior, remaining unharmed by his villainy and his subtle strategy. Thus, he set wild beasts on him as he kept vigil in the night; and well-nigh all the hyenas in that desert came out of their lairs and encircled him. With him in their midst, each with open jaw threatened to bite him. But he, knowing well the Enemy's craft, said to them all: "If you have received the power to do this against me, I am ready to be devoured by you; if you have been sent by demons, get out without delay, for I am Christ's servant." <sup>184</sup> As Antony was saying this, they fled, as though hounded by the whip of that word. <sup>185</sup>

53. Then a few days later as he was at work—for work was ever in his thoughts—someone came to the door and pulled the cord he was working with: he was weaving baskets, articles he gave to visitors in exchange for what they brought him. He rose and saw a monster resembling a man as far as the thighs, but having legs and feet like an ass. Antony simply made the Sign of the Cross and said: “I am Christ’s servant. If you are on a mission against me, here I am.” But the monster with its demons fled so fast that its speed caused it to fall and die. And the death of the monster stood for the fall of the demons: they were making every effort to drive him back from the desert, and they could not.

#### ANTONY VISITS THE BRETHREN ALONG THE NILE

54. Once the monks asked him to return to them and to spend some time on a visitation of them and their settlements. He made the journey with the monks who had come to meet him. A camel carried bread and water for them; for all the desert thereabouts is without water and there is no drinking water at all except in the one mountain from which they had drawn it, there where his cell is. Now, on the way the water gave out and they all were in danger, as the heat was most intense. They went about and returned without finding water. Presently they were too weak to even walk. They stretched themselves out upon the ground and let the camel go, giving themselves up in despair.

Then the old man, seeing the danger all were in, was overcome with grief. Sighing deeply, he walked a little way from them. He then knelt down, stretched forth his hands, and prayed. And at once the Lord made a spring come forth where he was praying, and so all drank and were refreshed.<sup>186</sup> Filling their waterskins, they set out to look for the camel and found it; for it so happened that the rope had wrapped around a stone and it was held fast. They brought it back and watered it, and putting the waterskins on it, finished their journey no worse for the incident.

As he came to the outer cells, all gave him a hearty welcome, regarding him as a father. And he, for his part, as though bringing them provisions from his mountain, entertained them with his stories and gave them of his practical experience. And again there was joy in the mountains and eagerness for improvement, and the consolations that come from a common faith.<sup>187</sup> And so he, too, rejoiced to witness the zeal of the monks and his sister grown old in her virginity, herself the guiding spirit of other virgins.

#### THE BRETHREN VISIT ANTONY

55. After some days he returned to his mountain. From then on many came to him, and there were those, too, who had an affliction and risked the journey to him. But as for all the monks who came to him, he had the same advice—to place their confidence in the Lord and to love Him, to keep themselves from bad thoughts and pleasures of the flesh, and not to be seduced by a full



stomach, as is written in Proverbs.<sup>188</sup> They should flee conceit and pray continually, sing Psalms before sleeping and after, commit to heart the commandments enjoined in the Scriptures, and hark back to the deeds of the saints, that the soul by keeping in mind the commandments might train itself on the example of their zeal. He counselled them above all to ever bear in mind the Apostle's word, *Let not the sun go down upon your wrath*,<sup>189</sup> and to regard this as spoken of all the commandments alike: the sun must not go down, not merely on our anger, but on any other sin of ours. "It is but right and necessary, too, that the sun does not condemn us for any sin by day, nor the moon for any fault or even any thought by night. To assure ourselves of this, it is well to hear and treasure what the Apostle says: *Judge yourselves and prove yourselves*.<sup>190</sup> Wherefore, let every man daily take an accounting with himself of the day's and the night's doings;<sup>191</sup> and if he has sinned, let him stop sinning; and if he has not, let him not boast of it. Let him rather persist in the good and not grow careless, nor pass judgment on his neighbor, nor pronounce himself as just, as the blessed Apostle Paul said, *until the Lord comes who searches out the hidden things*.<sup>192</sup> For often we are not aware of what we are doing—we do not know it, but the Lord notices everything. Therefore, leaving judgment to Him, let us have sympathy with each other and *bear one another's burdens*.<sup>193</sup> Ourselves let us judge; and where we fall short, let us be earnest about making up our deficiency. Let this observation be a safeguard against sinning: let us each note and write down our actions and impulses of the soul as though we were to report them to each other; and you may rest assured that from utter

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- shame of becoming known we shall stop sinning and entertaining sinful thoughts altogether. Who is there that likes to be seen sinning? Who, having sinned, would not choose to lie, hoping to escape detection? Just as we would not give ourselves over to lust within sight of each other, so if we were to write down our thoughts as if telling them to each other, we shall so much the more guard ourselves against foul thoughts for shame of being known. Now, then, let the written account stand for the eyes of our fellow ascetics, so that blushing at writing the same as if we were actually seen, we may never ponder evil. Molding ourselves in this way, we shall be able to *bring our body into subjection*,<sup>194</sup> to please the Lord and to trample under foot the machinations of the Enemy.”

### MIRACLES IN THE DESERT

56. Such were his words of advice to those who visited him. With those who suffered he united in sympathy and prayer; and often and in a great variety of cases the Lord heard his prayer. But he neither boasted when he was heard, nor did he complain when not heard. He always gave thanks to the Lord, and urged the sufferers to bear up and realize that healing was not his prerogative nor indeed any man's, but God's who performs it when He will and for whom He will. The sufferers were satisfied to receive even the mere words of the old man as a cure, for they had taken the lesson not to give up, but to be long-suffering. And those who were cured learned not to thank Antony, but God alone.

57. There was, for example, a man named Fronto,<sup>195</sup> hailing from Palatium. He had a dreadful disease, for he was continually biting his tongue, and his eyesight was failing. He came to the mountain and asked Antony to pray for him. The latter prayed and then said to Fronto: "Go, and you will be cured." But he was persistent and remained there for days, while Antony kept on saying: "You cannot be healed as long as you remain here. Go, and when you arrive in Egypt, you will see the miracle worked on you." The man was convinced and left; and the moment he came in sight of Egypt, his malady was gone. He was well according to the instructions of Antony which he had learned from the Savior in prayer.

58. A girl from Busiris in Tripoli<sup>196</sup> had a dreadful and very loathsome disease—a discharge from her eyes, nose, and ears immediately became worms when it fell to the ground. Moreover, her body was paralyzed and her eyes were defective. Her parents hearing of monks who were leaving to see Antony, and having faith in the Lord who healed the woman troubled with an issue of blood,<sup>197</sup> they asked to go along with their daughter. They consented. The parents and their child remained at the foot of the mountain with Paphnutius,<sup>198</sup> the confessor and monk. The others went up; and just as they wished to tell about the girl, he anticipated them and told them all about the sufferings of the child, and how she had made the journey with them.<sup>199</sup> Then when they asked if these people also might come in, he would not allow it, but said: "Go, and you will find her cured if she has not died. This certainly is no accomplishment of mine that she should come to a wretched man like me; no, indeed, her cure is the work of the Savior who shows His mercy in every

place to those who call upon Him. In this case, too, the Lord has granted her prayer, and His love for men has revealed to me that He will cure the child's malady where she is." At all events, the miracle actually took place: when they went down, they found the parents rejoicing and the girl in sound health from then on.

59. It happened that when two of the brethren were journeying to him, the water gave out on the journey: the one died and the other was on the point of dying. He no longer had strength to go, but lay on the ground expecting to die also. Antony, sitting on the mountain, called two monks who happened to be there, and urged them to hasten, saying: "Take a jar of water and run down the road towards Egypt; for two were coming, one has just died, and the other will unless you hurry. This has just now been revealed to me as I was praying." The monks, therefore, went and found the one lying dead and buried him. The other they revived with water and brought him to the old man. The distance was a day's journey. Now, if anyone asks why he did not speak before the other man died, his question is not justified. For the decree of death was not passed by Antony, but by God who determined it for the one and revealed the condition of the other. As for Antony, this alone was wonderful, that as he sat with sober heart on the mountain, the Lord showed him things afar off.

60. Again, on another occasion as he was sitting on the mountain and looking up, he saw in the air someone borne aloft amid great rejoicing of others who met him. Wondering at such a great host and thinking how blessed they were, he prayed to learn what this might be. And at

once a voice came to him saying that this was the soul of the monk Amoun in Nitria.<sup>200</sup> He had lived the life of an ascetic up to old age. Now, the distance from Nitria to the mountain where Antony was takes thirteen days to travel. Those who were with Antony, seeing the old man in wonderment, asked what it meant and were told that Amoun had just died.<sup>201</sup>

He was well-known, for he came there often and many miracles had taken place through him. The following is an example: Once when he had to cross the so-called Lycus River <sup>202</sup> and it was the flood season, he asked Theodore <sup>203</sup> to go well ahead of him so that they might not see each other naked while swimming across the water. Then, when Theodore had gone off, he felt further shame to see himself naked. While he was thus embarrassed and pondering, he was suddenly borne across to the opposite bank. Theodore, himself a pious man, came up; and seeing that the other had come over before him and had not even gotten wet, he asked how he had crossed. When he saw that he did not wish to tell him, he clung to his feet and insisted that he would not let him go until he had learned this from him. Noting Theodore's determination, especially from the declaration he had made, he insisted in turn that he should not tell anyone till his death, and so revealed to him that he had been carried across and set down on the other side; that he had not walked on the water and that this was not possible at all for man, but for the Lord alone and for those whom He permits, as He had done in the case of the great Apostle Peter.<sup>204</sup> Theodore, then, told this after Amoun's death.

Now, the monks to whom Antony had spoken of Amoun's death made a note of the day; and when after

thirty days the brethren arrived from Nitria, they inquired and learned that Amoun had fallen asleep<sup>205</sup> on that same day and hour when Antony saw his soul borne on high. And they as well as the others were amazed at the purity of Antony's soul, that he should learn at once what happened thirteen days away and should see the soul borne aloft.

61. Again, the count Archelaus<sup>206</sup> once met him in the Outer Mountain and asked him only to pray for Poly-cratia,<sup>207</sup> the admirable Christ-bearing<sup>208</sup> virgin of Laodicea. She was suffering severely from her stomach and side because of her excessive austerity, and her body was in an utterly weakened condition. Antony prayed, and the count made a note of the day on which the prayer was made. When he returned to Laodicea, he found the virgin well. Inquiring when and on what day she had been freed from her sickness, he produced the paper on which he had marked the time of the prayer. When he had been told, he immediately showed his notation on the paper; and all were astonished as they recognized that the Lord had cured her of her ailment at the very moment when Antony was praying and appealing to the Savior's goodness on her behalf.

62. And as for those who came to him, he frequently foretold their coming, days and sometimes a month in advance and for what reason they were coming. Some came merely to see him, others through sickness, and others suffering from demons. And all thought the exertion of the journey no trouble or loss: each returned feeling that he had been helped. While Antony had these powers of speech and vision, yet he begged that no one

should admire him for this account, but rather admire the Lord, because He granted to us mere men to know Him to the best of our capability.

63. On another occasion he had again come down to visit the outer cells. When he had been invited to enter a ship and pray with the monks, he alone perceived a horrible, very biting smell. The crew said that there were fish and salted meat on board and the odor was from them, but he insisted that the smell was different. While he was still speaking, a young man who had a demon and had come on board earlier as a stowaway, suddenly let out a shriek. On being censured in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the demon went out and the man became normal; and all knew that the stench was from the demon.

64. And another, a man of rank, came to him possessed by a demon. In this case the demon was so frightful that the possessed<sup>209</sup> man was not aware that he was going to Antony. He even devoured the excrement of his own body. The men who brought him begged Antony to pray for him. Feeling compassion for the young man, Antony prayed and kept awake with him the whole night. Towards dawn the youth suddenly rushed upon Antony and gave him a push. His companions became vexed at this, but Antony said: "Do not be angry with the young man, for he is not responsible, but the demon in him. Being rebuked and commanded to be gone to waterless places,<sup>210</sup> he was driven mad and he did this. Give thanks to the Lord, therefore, for his attacking me in this way is a sign of the demon's departure." The moment Antony had said this, the young man was normal again. Restored to his senses, he recognized where he was and embraced the old man, giving thanks to God.

## VISIONS

65. Numerous monks have stories—stories uniformly concordant—about many other such things done through him. These, however, do not appear so marvellous as compared with still more marvellous things. Once, for example, when he was about to eat and stood up to pray, about the ninth hour,<sup>211</sup> he felt himself carried off in spirit, and—strange to say—as he stood he saw himself, as it were, outside himself<sup>212</sup> and as though guided aloft by certain beings. Then he also saw loathsome and terrible beings standing in the air and bent on preventing him from passing through.<sup>213</sup> As his guides offered resistance, the others demanded to know on what plea he was not accountable to them. Then, when they set themselves to taking an account from his birth, Antony's guides intervened, saying to them: "As for the things dating from his birth, the Lord has erased them; but as for the time since he became monk and promised himself to God, you can take an account." Then, as they brought accusations but could not prove them, the way opened up to him free and unhindered; and presently he saw himself approaching, so it seemed to him, and halting with himself; and so he was the real Antony again.

Then, forgetting to eat, he spent the rest of the day and all the night sighing and praying. For he was astonished to see against how many we battle and what labors a person has to pass through the air; and he remembered that this is what the Apostle said—*according to the prince*



of the power of the air.<sup>214</sup> Here precisely lies the Enemy's power, that he fights and tries to stop those who pass through. Wherefore, too, his special admonition: *Take unto you the armor of God that you may be able to resist in the evil day . . . ;*<sup>215</sup> *that having no evil to say of us the Enemy may be put to shame.*<sup>216</sup> And we who have learned this, let us remember what the Apostle says: *Whether in the body I know not, or out of the body I know not; God knoweth.*<sup>217</sup> But Paul was carried up to the third heaven and heard *words unutterable*<sup>218</sup> and returned; whereas Antony saw himself entering the air and struggling until he became free.

66. Again, he had this favor from God. When he sat alone on the mountain, if ever in his reflections he failed to find a solution, it was revealed to him by Providence in answer to his prayer: the happy man was, in the words of Scripture, *taught of God.*<sup>219</sup> Thus favored, he once had a discussion with some visitors about the life of the soul and the kind of place it will have after this life. The following night there came a call from on high saying, "Antony, rise, go out and look!" He went out, therefore—he knew which calls to heed<sup>220</sup>—and, looking up, saw a towering figure, unsightly and frightening, standing and reaching to the clouds; further, certain beings ascending as though on wings. The former was stretching out his hands: some of the latter were stopped by him, while others flew over him and, having come through, rose without further trouble. At such as these the monster gnashed his teeth, but exulted over those who fell. Forthwith a voice addressed itself to Antony, "*Understand the vision!*"<sup>221</sup> His understanding opened up,<sup>222</sup> and he real-

ized that it was the passing of souls<sup>223</sup> and that the monster standing there was the Enemy, the envier of the faithful. Those answerable to him he lays hold of and keeps them from passing through, but those whom he failed to win over he cannot master as they pass out of his range. Here again, having seen this and taking it as a reminder, he struggled the more to advance from day to day in the things that lay before him.

He was not inclined to tell about these things to people. But when he had spent a long time in prayer and the wonder of it all absorbed him, and his companions kept on inquiring about it and importuning him, he was forced to speak. As a father he could not keep the secret from his children. He felt that his own conscience was clear and to tell them this might be a help to them. They would learn of the good fruit that the ascetic life brings and that often visions are granted as a compensation for its hardships.

#### ANTONY'S DEVOTION TO THE CHURCH'S MINISTERS

67. He was, moreover, forbearing by disposition and humble of soul. Renowned man that he was, he yet showed the profoundest respect for the Church's ministry and he wanted every cleric<sup>225</sup> to be honored above himself.<sup>226</sup> He was not ashamed to bow his head before bishops and priests; and if ever a deacon came to him for help, he conversed with him on what was helpful; but when it came to prayers, he would ask him to lead, not

being ashamed to learn himself. In fact, he would often ask questions and seek the views of his companions; and if he profited from what another said, he made acknowledgement of it.

His face, too, had a great and indescribable charm in it. And he had this added gift from the Savior: if he was present in a gathering of monks and someone who had no previous acquaintance with him wished to see him, as soon as he arrived he would pass over the others and run to Antony as if drawn by his eyes. It was not his stature or figure that made him stand out from the rest, but his settled character and the purity of his soul. For his soul was imperturbed, and so his outward appearance was calm.<sup>227</sup> The joy in his soul expressed itself in the cheerfulness of his face, and from the body's behavior one saw and knew the state of his soul, as Scripture says: *When the heart is glad, the face is radiant; but when it is full of grief, the face is gloomy.*<sup>228</sup> Thus Jacob observed that Laban was plotting against him, and said to his wives: *Your father's countenance is not as yesterday and the day before.*<sup>229</sup> Thus Samuel recognized David, for he had eyes that begot gladness and teeth white as milk.<sup>230</sup> So, too, was Antony recognized: he was never agitated, for his soul was calm; he was never gloomy, for there was joy in his mind.

### HIS LOYALTY TO THE FAITH

68. Again, in matters of faith his devotion was absolutely admirable. For instance, he never had anything to do with the Meletian<sup>231</sup> schismatics, aware of their wick-

edness and apostasy from the beginning. Nor did he have any friendly dealings with the Manichaeans<sup>232</sup> or any other heretics, except only to admonish them to return to the true religion.<sup>233</sup> He thought and taught that friendship and association with them brought harm and ruin to the soul. So, too, he loathed the heresy of the Arians<sup>234</sup> and he exhorted all not to go near them nor to share their perverted belief. Once when some of the Ariomaniacs<sup>235</sup> came to him, he questioned them closely; and when he learned of their impious faith, he drove them from the mountain, saying that their words were worse than the poison of serpents.

69. When on one occasion the Arians gave out the lie that his views were the same as theirs, he showed that he was vexed and angry with them. Answering the appeal of both the bishops and all the brethren, he came down from the mountain, and entering Alexandria,<sup>236</sup> he denounced the Arians. He said that their heresy was the worst of all and a forerunner of the Antichrist. He taught the people that the Son of God is not a creature nor has He come into being "from non-existence"; but "He is the eternal Word and Wisdom of the substance of the Father. Hence, too, it is impious to say, 'there was a time when He was not,'<sup>237</sup> for the Word was always coexistent with the Father. Wherefore, do not have the least thing to do with the most godless Arians: there simply is no *fellowship of light with darkness*.<sup>238</sup> You must remember that you are God-fearing Christians, but they by saying that the Son and Word of God the Father is a creature, are in no respect different from the pagans *who worship the created in place of God the Creator*.<sup>239</sup> And you may be sure that

all creation is incensed against them because they count among created things the Creator and Lord of all, to whom all things owe their existence."

70. The people all rejoiced to hear such a man anathematize the heresy which fights against Christ.<sup>240</sup> The entire city ran together to see Antony. Pagans,<sup>241</sup> too, and even their so-called priests came to the church saying: "We would like to see the man of God"—for so they all called him. Moreover, there also the Lord through him rid many of demons and cured mental cases. Many pagans, too, asked but to touch the old man, confident that they would be helped; and, indeed, as many became Christians in those few days as one would have seen in a year. Again, some thought he was annoyed by the crowds and therefore were trying to keep all away from him; but he, unannoyed, said: "These people are no more numerous than those demons we wrestle with on the mountain."

71. When he was leaving and we<sup>242</sup> were seeing him off and had arrived at the gate, a woman behind us cried out: "Wait, man of God, my daughter is terribly plagued by a demon! Wait, please, or I shall hurt myself running." The old man heard her, we begged him to stop, and he did so gladly. When the woman approached, her child was hurled to the ground. Antony prayed and called upon the name of Christ, the child stood up cured as the unclean spirit left her. The mother gave praise to God and all gave thanks. And he, too, rejoiced as he left for the mountain—to him his own home.<sup>243</sup>

## WISDOM TO THE WISE

72. He also had a very high degree of practical wisdom. The wonder was that although he was without formal schooling,<sup>244</sup> he was yet a man of ready wit and understanding. To illustrate: once two Greek philosophers came to him, thinking they could experiment with Antony. He happened to be on the Outer Mountain at the time. When he had sized up the men from their appearance, he went out to them and said through an interpreter: "Why, philosophers, have you gone to so much trouble to come to a foolish man?" When they said that he was not foolish, but very wise, he said to them: "If you have come to a foolish man, your trouble is to no purpose; but if you do think that I am wise, make yourselves what I am, for one ought to imitate the good. Indeed, if I had come to you, I would have imitated you; conversely, now that you have come to me, make yourselves what I am: I am a Christian." They left marvelling at him, for they saw that even demons feared Antony.

73. Others again of the same kind met him in the Outer Mountain and thought they could fop him because he had not received any schooling. Antony said to them: "Well, what do you say, which is first, the mind or letters? And which is the cause of which—the mind of letters, or letters of the mind?" When they stated that the mind is first and the inventor of letters, Antony said: "Therefore, one who has a sound mind has no need of letters."<sup>245</sup> This amazed both them and the bystanders. They went away

astonished to see such wisdom in an ordinary man.<sup>246</sup> For he did not have the rough manner of one who had lived and grown old in the mountains, but he was a man of grace and urbanity. His speech was seasoned with divine wisdom<sup>247</sup> so that no one bore him ill-will, but rather all rejoiced over him who sought him out.

74. And indeed, after this still others came.<sup>248</sup> They were of those who among the pagans are supposedly wise. They asked him to state an argument for our faith in Christ. When they tried to make inferences from the preaching of the divine Cross<sup>249</sup> and wished to scoff, Antony paused for a moment, and first pitying them for their ignorance, said through an interpreter who gave an excellent translation of his words: "Which is better—to confess the Cross, or to attribute adulteries and pederasties to your so-called gods? For to maintain what we maintain is a sign of manly spirit and betokens disregard for death, whereas your claims bespeak but wanton passions. Again, which is better—to say that the Word of God was not changed, but remaining the same took on a human body for the salvation and well-being of mankind, so that by sharing human birth, He might make men partakers of the divine and spiritual nature;<sup>250</sup> or to put the divine on a level with senseless things and therefore to worship beasts and reptiles and images of men? These precisely are the objects worshipped by you wise men. How dare you revile us for saying that Christ has appeared as man, whereas you derive the soul from heaven, saying that it strayed and fell from the vault of the heavens into the body? Would that it were only into the body of man, and not that it changed and migrated into beasts and serpents!<sup>251</sup>

Our faith declares Christ's coming <sup>252</sup> for the salvation of men; but you mistakenly theorize about an uncreated Soul.<sup>253</sup> We believe in the power of Providence and His love of men and that this <sup>254</sup> also was not impossible with God; but you, calling the Soul an image of the Mind,<sup>255</sup> impute falls to it and fabricate myths about its ability to change.<sup>256</sup> Consequently, you make also the Mind itself changeable because of the Soul. For as was the image, so, too, must be that of which it is the image. But when you have such thoughts about the Mind, remember that you are also blaspheming the Father of the Mind.<sup>257</sup>

75. "And regarding the Cross, which would you say is better: when treachery is resorted to by wicked men, to endure the Cross and not to flinch from death in any manner or form,<sup>258</sup> or to fabricate fables about the wanderings of Osiris and Isis,<sup>259</sup> the plots of Typhon, the banishment of Cronus,<sup>260</sup> the swallowing of children, and slaying of fathers? Yes, here we have your wisdom!

"And why is it that while you deride the Cross, you do not marvel at the Resurrection? For those who reported the one also wrote of the other. Or why is it that while you remember the Cross, you have nothing to say about the dead brought back to life, the blind who saw again, the paralytics who were cured and the lepers made clean, the walking on the sea, and the other signs and wonders which show Christ not as man but as God? At all events, it seems to me that you are but defrauding yourselves and are not really familiar with our Scriptures. But do read them and see that the things which Christ did, prove Him to be God abiding with us for the salvation of mankind.

76. "But you must also tell us your own teachings.



Though, what could you say about senseless things except senselessness and barbarism? But if, as I hear, you wish to say that among you people such things are spoken figuratively;<sup>261</sup> and you make the rape of Persephone<sup>262</sup> an allegory of the earth, Hephaestus' lameness of the fire, Hera of the air, Apollo of the sun, Artemis of the moon, and Poseidon of the sea: even so you are not worshipping God Himself, but you are rendering service to the creature in place of the God who created all. For if you have composed such stories because creation is beautiful, it was for you to go no further than to admire it, and not to make gods of the creatures lest you give the honor that is the Maker's<sup>263</sup> to the things made. In that case it were time that you transferred the honor due the architect to the house built by him, or the honor due the general to the soldier. Now, what have you to say to all this? Thus we shall know whether the Cross has anything that deserves to be made a jest of."

77. They were embarrassed and turning this way and that. Antony smiled and said, again through an interpreter: "Sight itself bears proof of all that I have said. But since, of course, you pin your faith on demonstrative proofs and this is an art in which you are masters, and you want us also not to worship God without demonstrative arguments—do you first tell me this. How does precise knowledge of things come about, especially knowledge about God? Is it by verbal proof or by an act of faith? And which comes first, an active faith or verbal proof?" When they replied that the act of faith takes precedence and that this constitutes accurate knowledge, Antony said: "Well said! Faith arises from the disposition of the soul, while dialectic comes from the skill of those who

devise it. Accordingly, those who are equipped with an active faith have no need of verbal argument, and probably find it even superfluous. For what we apprehend by faith, that you attempt to construct by arguments; and often you cannot even express what we perceive. The conclusion is that an active faith is better and stronger than your sophistic arguments.

78. "We Christians, therefore, possess religious truth<sup>264</sup> not on the basis of Greek philosophical reasoning,<sup>265</sup> but founded on the power of a faith vouchsafed us by God through Jesus Christ. And as for the truth of the account given, note how we who have remained unlettered believe in God, recognizing from His works His Providence over all things. And as for our faith being something effectual, note how we lean upon our belief in Christ, while you take support from sophistical wranglings over words; and your phantom idols are passing into desuetude, but our faith is spreading everywhere. And you with your syllogisms and sophisms are not converting anybody from Christianity to paganism;<sup>266</sup> but we, teaching faith in Christ, are stripping your gods of the fear they inspired,<sup>267</sup> now that all are recognizing Christ as God and the Son of God. You with all your elegant diction do not hinder the teaching of Christ; but we by mentioning the name of the crucified Christ drive away all the demons whom you fear as gods. Where the Sign of the Cross appears, there magic is powerless and sorcery ineffectual.<sup>268</sup>

79. "Indeed, tell us, where are now your oracles? Where are the incantations of the Egyptians? Where are the phantom illusions of the magicians? When did all these things cease and lose their significance? Was it not

when the Cross of Christ came? Wherefore, is it this that deserves scorn, and not rather the things that have been done away with by it and proved powerless? This, too, is remarkable, the fact that your religion was never persecuted; on the contrary, among men it is held in honor in every city. Christ's followers, however, are persecuted, and yet it is our cause that flourishes and prevails, not yours. Your religion, for all the tranquillity and protection it enjoys, is dying; whereas the faith and teaching of Christ, scorned by you and often persecuted by the rulers, has filled the world. When was there a time that the knowledge of God shone forth so brightly? Or when was there a time that continence and the virtue of virginity so showed itself? Or when was death so despised as when the Cross of Christ came? And this no one doubts when he sees <sup>269</sup> the martyrs despising death for Christ's sake, or sees the virgins of the Church who for Christ's sake keep their bodies pure and undefiled.

80. "These are proofs sufficient to show that faith in Christ is the only true religion. Still, here you are—you who seek for conclusions based on reasoning, you have no faith! We, however, do not prove, as our teacher said, in *persuasive words of Greek wisdom*; <sup>270</sup> but it is by faith that we persuade men, faith which tangibly precedes any constructive reasoning of arguments. See, here we have with us some who are suffering from demons." These were people who had come to him troubled by demons; bringing them forward, he said: "Either cleanse these by your syllogisms and by any art or magic you wish, calling on your idols; or, if you cannot, then stop fighting us and see the power of the Cross of Christ." Having said this, he invoked Christ and signed the afflicted with the Sign of the

Cross, repeating the action a second and third time. And at once the persons stood up completely cured, restored to their right mind and giving thanks to the Lord. The so-called philosophers were astonished and really amazed at the man's sagacity and at the miracle performed. But Antony said: "Why do you marvel at this? It is not we who do it, but Christ who does these things through those who believe in Him. Do you, therefore, also believe, and you will see that it is not wordcraft which we have, but faith through love that works for Christ; and if you, too, will make this your own, you will no longer seek arguments from reason, but will consider faith in Christ sufficient by itself."

So did Antony speak. They admired him as they left, embraced him and acknowledged that they had been helped by him.

#### THE EMPEROR CONSTANTINE WRITES TO HIM

81. The fame of Antony reached even to emperors; for when Constantine Augustus and his sons Constantius Augustus and Constans Augustus heard about these things, they wrote<sup>271</sup> to him as to a father and begged him to write back. He, however, did not make much of the documents nor did he rejoice over the letters; but he was the same as he was before the emperor wrote to him. When the documents were brought to him, he called the monks and said: "You must not be surprised if an emperor writes to us, for he is a man; but you should rather be

surprised that God has written the law for mankind and has spoken to us through His own Son." <sup>272</sup> Indeed, he did not like to accept the letters, saying that he did not know what to answer to such things. But being persuaded by the monks who urged that the emperors were Christians and that they might take offense at being ignored, he had them read. And he wrote back, commending them for worshipping Christ, and giving them salutary advice not to think highly of the things of this world, but rather to bear in mind the judgment to come; and to know that Christ alone is the true and eternal King. <sup>273</sup> He begged them to show themselves humane and to have a regard for justice and for the poor. And they were glad to receive his answer. So was he beloved by all, and all wished to have him as a father.

#### HE FORETELLS THE RAVAGES OF THE ARIAN HERETICS

82. Giving such account of himself and thus answering those who sought him out, he returned again to the Inner Mountain. He kept up his wonted ascetic practices, and often as he was sitting or walking with visitors he would become dumb, as it is written in Daniel. <sup>274</sup> After some time he would take up again what he had been saying to the brethren who were with him; and those present would know that he was seeing a vision. For often when he was on the mountain he saw things happening even in Egypt. He would describe them to the bishop Serapion <sup>275</sup> when he chanced to be on the Inner Mountain <sup>276</sup> and saw Antony entranced in a vision.

On one occasion, for instance, as he sat working, he took on the appearance of one in ecstasy and moaned continuously at what he saw. Then after some time he turned to those present, moaning and trembling, and prayed and knelt down, remaining in that position a long time. And when he arose, the old man was weeping. Then those with him were shaken and very much alarmed and asked him to tell what it was; and they pressed him for a long time until he was constrained to speak. Sighing deeply, he said: "Oh, my children, it were better to die before the things in the vision take place." When they asked further questions, he said with tears: "Wrath is about to strike the Church and she is about to be delivered up to men who are like to senseless beasts. For I saw the table of the Lord's house, and mules around it standing on all sides in a ring and kicking up their hoofs at what was within, the same as the kicking you have when a frisking herd runs wild. You surely heard," he said, "how I moaned; I heard a voice saying: 'My altar shall be desecrated.' "

So spoke the old man; and two years later came the present assault of the Arians and the plundering of the churches,<sup>277</sup> when they took the vessels by force and had them carried away by the pagans; when, too, they forced the pagans from the shops to their meetings and in their presence did as they pleased on the sacred table. Then we all realized that the kicking of the mules presaged to Antony what the Arians are now doing like so many senseless beasts.

When he saw this vision, he consoled his companions, saying: "Do not be discouraged, children, for as the Lord has been angry, so will He bring us recovery later. And

the Church will quickly regain the beauty that is hers and shine with her wonted splendor. You will see the persecuted restored and irreligion retreating again to its proper haunts and the true faith asserting itself everywhere with complete freedom. Only, do not defile yourselves with the Arians. This their teaching is not of the Apostles, but of the demons and their father, the Devil. Indeed, it is sterile and unreasonable, and it lacks right sense—like the senselessness of mules.”<sup>278</sup>

#### GOD'S WONDER-WORKER AND PHYSICIAN OF SOULS

83. Such is the story of Antony. We must not show ourselves skeptical when it is through a man that all these great wonders came to pass. For it is the promise of the Savior who says: *If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain: 'Remove hence!' and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you.*<sup>279</sup> And again: *Amen, amen, I say to you, if you ask the Father anything in my name, He will give it to you . . . . Ask and you shall receive.*<sup>280</sup> And it is He who said to His disciples and to all who believe in Him: *Heal the sick; . . . cast out the demons; freely have you received, freely give.*<sup>281</sup>

84. Antony, then, healed not by giving out commands, but by praying and by calling upon Christ's name, so that it was clear to all that it was not he who did this, but the Lord showing His loving-kindness to men and curing the sufferers through Antony. Antony had to do only with

prayer and the practice of asceticism for the sake of which he lived his mountain life, happy in the contemplation of the divine and grieving that many disturbed him and forced him to the Outer Mountain.

All the judges, for instance, begged him to come down from the mountain, since it was impossible for them to go there because of their following of people involved in lawsuits. They asked him to come that they might but see him. But he tried to avoid the journey to them and begged to be excused from making it. They persisted, however, and even sent to him defendants under escort of soldiers, that on account of these he might come down. Under such compulsion, therefore, and seeing them lamenting, he would go to the Outer Mountain; and again the trouble he went to was not in vain, for to many he was a help and his coming a benefaction. He helped the judges by counselling them to give justice precedence over all else, and to fear God and to bear in mind *with what judgment they judged they would be judged*.<sup>282</sup> But of all things he loved his mountain life most.

85. Once when he had been thus importuned by persons who needed assistance and the military commander had sent numerous messengers asking him to come down, he came and spoke a few words on the subject of salvation and in behalf of those who wanted him, and then hastened to leave. When the duke,<sup>283</sup> as he is called, begged him to stay, he said he could not spend any time with them, and satisfied him by a beautiful comparison, saying: "Just as fish exposed for any length of time on dry land die, so monks go to pieces when they loiter among you and spend too much time with you. Therefore, we must off to the mountain, as fish to the sea. Other-



wise, if we tarry, we may lose sight of the inner life.” The commandant on hearing this and much more from him, admiringly said that truly this was a servant of God; for whence could an ordinary man have such extraordinary intelligence, unless he were beloved of God?

86. There was one commandant—Balacius was his name—<sup>284</sup> who in his partisanship for the execrable Arians bitterly persecuted us Christians. And since he was so barbaric as to beat virgins and strip and flog monks,<sup>285</sup> Antony sent him a letter with the following contents: “I see God’s judgment approaching you; stop, therefore, persecuting Christians, that the judgment may not seize you; even now it is on the point of overtaking you.” But Balacius laughed, threw the letter on the ground and spat on it, and maltreated the bearers, telling them to take back this message to Antony: “Seeing that you are concerned about the monks, I shall now come after you, too.” And five days had not passed when God’s judgment overtook him. For Balacius and Nestorius, the prefect of Egypt,<sup>286</sup> had gone out to the first station out of Alexandria, which is called Chereu,<sup>287</sup> and both were on horseback. The horses belonged to Balacius and were the most gentle of all he kept. They had not yet reached the place, when the horses began to frisk with one another, as horses do, and suddenly the gentler of the two, the one on which Nestorius was riding, bit Balacius, threw him down, and attacked him; and it rent his thigh so badly with its teeth, that he had to be taken back to the city at once and he died in three days. And all wondered that what Antony had foretold was fulfilled so quickly.

87. Thus did he warn the harsh. But as for the others

who came to him, his heart-to-heart talks with them made them forthwith forget their litigation and deem those happy who withdraw from life in the world. He so championed the cause of the wronged that one would think that he himself, not the others, was the injured party. Further, he had such a gift for helping everybody that many who were in military service and many men of great affluence gave up their burdensome life and then became monks. In a word, it was as though a physician had been given by God to Egypt. For who came to him in grief and did not return in joy? Who came weeping for his dead and did not immediately put away his mourning? Who came in anger and was not transformed into friendliness? What down-and-out pauper met him, and seeing him and hearing him did not despise wealth and feel consoled in his poverty? What monk grown careless did not gain new fervor from a visit with him? What young man coming to the mountain, and seeing Antony, did not promptly renounce pleasure and love chastity? Who came to him plagued by a demon and was not freed? Who came with tortured mind and did not find peace of mind?

88. This was also unique in Antony's practice of asceticism that, as I stated above, he had the gift of discerning spirits.<sup>288</sup> He recognized their movements and was well aware in what direction each of them directed his effort and attack. Not only was he himself not fooled by them, but encouraging others who were harassed in their thoughts, he taught them how they might ward off their designs, describing the weaknesses and wiles of the spirits practicing possession. And so each went down as though anointed<sup>289</sup> by him and filled with confidence against the designs of the Devil and his demons.

And how many girls who had suitors but who had seen Antony only from afar, remained virgins for Christ! People came to him also from foreign lands. These received help like all the others, and returned as though sent on their way by a father. And indeed, now that he has passed away, all, like orphans who have lost their father, comfort themselves by one thing—their memory of him—cherishing at the same time his words of admonition and counsel.

## D E A T H

89. This is also the place for me to tell and for you to hear, as you are anxious to, how he came to the end of his life; for in this, too, he was a model for imitation. —

As was his wont, he happened to be visiting the monks in the Outer Mountain. Receiving a premonition of his death from Providence, he spoke to the brethren, saying: "This is the last visit I am making with you, and I am wondering if we shall see each other again in this life. It is time now for me to die, for I am near a hundred and five years." Hearing this they wept, embracing and kissing the old man. But he, as though he were departing from a foreign town for his own, chatted joyously. He exhorted them "not to grow lax in their efforts nor to lose heart in the practice of the ascetic life, but to live as though dying daily; and, as I have said before, to work hard to guard the soul from filthy thoughts; to emulate holy men. Do not go near the Meletian schismatics, for you know their wicked and unholy teaching. Have nothing to do with the Arians, for the irreligion of these is plain to everyone.

✓ And if you should see the judges supporting them, you must not permit yourself to be confused: this will come to an end—it is a phenomenon that is mortal and bound to last for but a short time. Therefore, keep yourselves clean from these and watch over the tradition of the Fathers, and, above all, the orthodox faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, as you have learned it from the Scriptures and as you have often been put in mind of by me.”

90. When the brethren urged him to stay with them and die there, he refused to do so for many reasons, as he indicated, though without saying anything, and especially because of this. The Egyptians have the custom of honoring with funeral rites and wrapping in linen shrouds the bodies of good men, and especially of the holy martyrs; but they do not bury them in the earth, but place them on couches and keep them with them at home, thinking in this way to honor the departed. Antony had often asked even the bishops to give instructions to the people on the matter. Likewise he had made laymen ashamed and reprov'd women, saying that this was “not right nor reverent at all. The bodies of the Patriarchs and the Prophets are preserved in tombs to this day; and the body of the Lord, too, was placed in a tomb, and a stone set there hid it<sup>290</sup> until He rose on the third day.” By stating the case thus, he showed that he commits a wrong who after death does not bury the bodies of the departed, holy though they be. Indeed, what is greater or holier than the Lord’s body? As a result, many who had heard him, from then on buried their dead<sup>291</sup> and thanked the Lord that they had received a good lesson.

91. He knew this and was afraid that they might do

the same to his own body. Therefore, bidding farewell to the monks on the Outer Mountain, he hastily made for the Inner Mountain where he was used to living. After a few months he fell sick. He called those who were with him—there were two there who had been ascetics for fifteen years and looked after him because of his great age<sup>292</sup>—and said to them: “I am going the way of my fathers, as Scripture says,<sup>293</sup> for I see myself called by the Lord. And you—be on your guard and do not bring to naught the asceticism you have practiced for so long. Make it your endeavor to keep up your enthusiasm as though you were but now beginning. You know the demons and their designs, you know how fierce they are, yet how powerless. So, do not fear them; rather, let Christ be your life’s breath, and place your confidence in Him. Live as if dying daily,<sup>294</sup> taking heed for yourselves and remembering the counsels you have heard from me. Let there be no communion whatever between you and the schismatics and none at all with the heretical Arians.<sup>295</sup> You know how I myself have kept away from them because of their Christ-attacking false heresy. Show your eagerness to give your allegiance, first to the Lord and then to His saints, *that after your death they may receive you into everlasting dwellings*<sup>296</sup> as familiar friends. Give these things your thought, make them your purpose; and if you have any care for me and think of me as a father, do not allow anyone to take my body into Egypt, lest they should keep it in their houses. This was my reason for going to the mountain and coming here. You know how I have always put to shame those who do this and charged them to stop the custom. Therefore, carry out my obsequies yourselves and bury my body in the earth and let what

I have said be so respected by you, that no one will know the place but you alone. At the resurrection of the dead I shall receive it back from the Savior incorruptible. Distribute my garments. To Bishop Athanasius give the one sheepskin and the cloak on which I lie, which he gave me but which has worn out in my possession;<sup>297</sup> and to Bishop Serapion give the other sheepskin, and keep the hair shirt for yourselves. And now, my children, God bless you; Antony is going and is with you no more."

92. Having said this and having been kissed by them, he drew up his feet; and with a look as though friends had come to him and he was overjoyed at sight of them—for, as he lay there, his face had a cheerful look—he passed away and was gathered to his fathers. Then they, following the orders he had given them, prepared and wrapped up the body and buried it there in the earth. And to this day no one knows where he is buried, save those two only.<sup>298</sup> As for the recipients of the sheepskin of the blessed Antony and the cloak worn out by him, each guards his gift as some great treasure. For to look on them is like seeing Antony; and to wear them is like taking on his exhortations with joy.

93. This was the end of Antony's life in the body, as above we had the beginning of his ascetical life. And though this be but a meagre account as compared with the virtue of the man, yet do take this and reflect what manner of man Antony, the man of God, was. From youth to so great an age he preserved an unswerving devotion to the ascetic life. He never made old age the excuse for yielding to the desire for lavish foods, nor did he change in his form of clothing because of his body's

infirmity, nor did he as much as wash his feet with water. And yet his health remained entirely unimpaired. For instance, even his eyes were perfectly normal so that his sight was excellent; and he had not lost a single tooth, only they had worn down near the gums through the old man's great age. He also kept healthy hands and feet, and on the whole he appeared brighter and more active than did all those who use a diversified diet and baths and a variety of clothing.

The fact that he became famous everywhere and that he found universal admiration and his loss is felt even by people who have never seen him, betokens his virtue and a soul beloved of God. For Antony gained renown not for his writings, nor for worldly wisdom, nor for any art, but solely for his service of God.

And that this was something God-given no one could deny. For whence was it that this man who lived hidden in a mountain was heard of in Spain and Gaul, in Rome and in Africa, if it was not God who everywhere makes known His own, who, moreover, had told this to Antony at the very beginning?<sup>299</sup> For though they do their work in secret and though they wish to remain obscure, yet the Lord shows them forth as lamps to all men, that thus again those who hear of them may realize that the commandments can lead to perfection, and may take courage on the path to virtue.

## E P I L O G U E

94. Now, then, read this to the other brethren,<sup>300</sup> that they may learn what the life of monks should be like and that they may be convinced that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ glorifies those who glorify Him; and that He not only leads to the Kingdom of Heaven those who serve Him to the end, but even here He makes them, though they hide themselves and strive to live away from the world, known and spoken of everywhere because of their own goodness and because of the help they give to others. And if the occasion presents itself, read it also to the pagans, that at least in this way they may learn that our Lord Jesus Christ is not only God and the Son of God, but that the Christians by their faithful service to Him and their orthodox faith in Him prove that the demons whom the Greeks consider gods are no gods; that, moreover, they trample them under foot and drive them out for what they are—deceivers and corrupters of men; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom is glory for ever and ever. Amen.



# NOTES



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Acta SS	J. Bollandus (Bollandists), <i>Acta sanctorum</i> (Antwerp, etc. 1643-)
ACW	<i>Ancient Christian Writers</i> (Westminster, Md. 1946-)
Bardenhewer	O. Bardenhewer, <i>Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur</i> 1-3, 2nd ed.; 4-5 (1913-1932)
Butler	C. Butler, <i>The Lausiac History of Palladius</i> 1-2 (Texts and Studies 6. 1-2, Cambridge 1898-1904)
DACL	<i>Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie</i> (Paris 1924-)
DTC	<i>Dictionnaire de théologie catholique</i> (Paris 1903-)
LTK	<i>Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche</i> 1-10 (Freiburg i. Br. 1930-1938)
MG	J. P. Migne, <i>Patrologia graeca</i>
OCD	<i>Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> (Oxford 1949)
RE	A. Pauly—G. Wissowa—W. Kroll, <i>Realenzyklopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> (Stuttgart 1894-)
TWNT	G. Kittel, <i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> (Stuttgart 1933-)

## INTRODUCTION

<sup>1</sup> This was the common view in the fourth century—cf. St. Jerome, *Vita S. Pauli* 1. Some, whom Jerome favors, held that the title belonged to the hermit Paul of Thebes (228-341). See W. H. Mackean, *Christian Monasticism in Egypt to the Close of the Fourth Century* (London 1920) 67 f.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* 1. 13, and below, n. 5 to the text.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 19. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 6. 34.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Thess. 3. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Regarding certain chronological difficulties, notably the question whether or not the period spent in the tomb and the time he lived in the abandoned fort are concurrent or identical, cf. L. v. Hertling, *Antonius der Einsiedler* (Forsch. z. Gesch. d. innerkirchlichen Lebens 1, Innsbruck 1929) 30-34.

<sup>7</sup> See below, § 12 of the text and n. 52.

<sup>8</sup> See below, § 46 and nn. 163-7.

<sup>9</sup> See below, n. 177 to the text.

<sup>10</sup> C. Kingsley, *The Hermits* (London 1868) 128.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Mackean, *op. cit.* 79 f.; P. F. Anson, *The Quest of Solitude* (London 1932) 16 f.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. St. Jerome, *Vita S. Hilar.* 3.

<sup>13</sup> *Hist. monach. in Aegypto* 28 (86-90 Preuschen); Rufinus, *Apol. in Hier.* 2. 12.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Hist. Laus.* 8 (2. 26-29 Butler), and below, § 60 with n. 200; for Paul the Simple, see *Hist. Laus.* 22 (2. 69-74 Butler).

<sup>15</sup> Butler 1. 225 f.

<sup>16</sup> Butler, the title entered above in the List of Abbreviations; Bousset, *Apophthegmata, Studien zur Geschichte des ältesten Mönchtums* (Tübingen 1923). For further literature, cf. B. Altaner's Italian edition (by A. Ferrua) of his patrology: *Patrologia* (Rome 1944) 146 f.; for the *Apophthegmata*, note E. C. Tappert, 'A Greek Hagiologic Manuscript in Philadelphia,' *Trans. of the Am. Philol. Assoc.* 68 (1937) 264-76. Generous samples of the *Verba Seniorum* and the *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto* were recently given in English translation by Miss Helen Waddell, *The Desert Fathers* (New York 1936) 53-216.

<sup>17</sup> Some of these references and others occurring elsewhere have been incorporated in the observations on the text: cf. nn. 16, 60, 166, 170, 178, 236, 243, 246, 292, 297.

<sup>18</sup> Following the studies of A. Eichhorn, *Athanasii de vita ascetica testimonia collecta* (Halle 1886). See below, n. 277 to the text.

<sup>19</sup> Thus v. Hertling, *op. cit.* 7 n. 2, who favors the period when Athanasius finally resided in peace in Alexandria, 365-373.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Butler 1. 215-28: 'Recent Theories Concerning St. Antony.'

<sup>21</sup> St. Jerome, *De viris ill.* 87 f., 125.

<sup>22</sup> St. Gregory Nazianzen, *Or. 21 (In laudem Athanasii)* 5.

<sup>23</sup> Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* 8 (2. 28 Butler).

<sup>24</sup> *Select Writings and Letters of Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria*, in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* 4 (New York-Oxford-London 1892) 188, where see his excellent summary of opinions up to his time. Cf. also K. Heussi, *Der Ursprung des Mönchtums* (Tübingen 1936) 1-10.

<sup>25</sup> *Ursprung des Mönchtums im nachkonstantinischen Zeitalter* (Gotha 1877).

<sup>26</sup> See below, the notes to the text, 6, 60, 244.

<sup>27</sup> Eichhorn, *op. cit.* 52, quoted by Robertson, *op. cit.* 191. See also Butler 1. 227 f.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. H. Delehaye, *Les légendes hagiographiques* (Subsidia hagiogr. 18 - 3rd ed. Brussels 1927) 68-70.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. v. Hertling, *op. cit.* 7-12.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. G. Bardy, *Saint Athanase* (Paris 1914) 48.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. P. Batiffol, *La paix constantinienne et la catholicisme* (3rd ed. Paris 1914) 445-7.

<sup>32</sup> *Hist. Laus.* 1 (2. 16 Butler).

<sup>33</sup> *Epist.* 127. 5. Cf. P. de Labriolle, in Fliche-Martin, *Histoire de l'Eglise* 3 (Paris 1947) 348 f.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. E. S. Duckett, *The Gateway to the Middle Ages* (New York 1938) 358 f.; M. L. W. Laistner, *Thought and Letters in Western Europe 500-900* (London 1921) 15.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. F. Blass, *Die attische Beredsamkeit* 2 (2nd ed. Leipzig 1892) 284-8.

<sup>36</sup> This forms the theme of List's monograph, *Das Antoniusleben des hl. Athanasius d. Grossen: eine literarhistorische Studie zu den Anfängen der byzantinischen Hagiographie* (Texte u. Forsch. z. byz.-neugr. Philol. 11, Athens 1930); cf. 62, his résumé.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. E. C. Marchand, *Xenophon, Scripta Minora* (Loeb Classical Library, London 1925) xviii-xix; Blass, *op. cit.* 2. 379-85.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. R. Reitzenstein, *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen* (Leipzig 1906) 55-59, for which see A. Puech, *Histoire de la littérature chrétienne* 3 (Paris 1930) 116; cf. also List, *op. cit.* 59-61.

<sup>39</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>40</sup> List, *op. cit.* 61.

<sup>41</sup> From v. Hertling's final appraisal of Antony's stature—*op. cit.* 88. Here we may also quote the words of Cardinal Newman (*The Church of the Fathers*, in *Historical Sketches* 2 [New York-Bombay 1906] 111), previously cited by Butler 1. 228: 'His doctrine surely is pure and unimpeachable; and his temper is high and heavenly,—without cowardice, without gloom, without formality, and without

self-complacency. Superstition is abject and crouching, it is full of thoughts of guilt; it distrusts God, and dreads the powers of evil. Antony at least has nothing of this, being full of holy confidence, divine peace, cheerfulness, and valorousness. . . .'

<sup>42</sup> For this and the following, see the excellent observations by v. Hertling, *op. cit.* 47-56; also M. Viller—K. Rahner, *Aszese und Mystik in der Väterzeit* (Freiburg i. Br. 1938) 86 f.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. List, *op. cit.* 55-59.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Viller-Rahner, *loc. cit.*

<sup>45</sup> Perhaps this was already in the Latin version by Evagrius. Cf. H. Günter, *Legendenstudien* (Cologne 1906) 83 f.; H. Mertel, *Des heiligen Athanasius Leben des heiligen Antonius* (Bibl. d. Kirchenv. 31, Munich 1917) 1.

<sup>46</sup> St. Jerome, *De viris ill.* 125. An even earlier Latin translation, which is anonymous, was brought to light by A. Wilmart, 'Une version latine inédite de la Vie de saint Antoine,' *Revue bénédictine* 31 (1914) 163-73. It was edited by G. Garitte, *Un témoin important du texte de la vie de saint Antoine par saint Athanase. La version latine inédite des Archives du Chapitre de Saint-Pierre à Rome* (Etudes de philol., d'archéol. et d'hist. anc. 3, Brussels-Rome 1939).

<sup>47</sup> St. Augustine, *Conf.* 8. 6. 14: 'Then when I told him (Ponticianus) that I spent a great deal of effort in the reading of Scripture, he began to tell me the story of Antony, the Egyptian monk whose name was famous among Thy servants, but up to then was unknown to us.' See *ibid.* 12. 29, and below, n. 13 to the text; also A. D. Nock, *Conversion: the Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Oxford 1933) 265. For traces of St. Athanasius in the works of St. Augustine, see the study by B. Altaner, 'Augustinus und Athanasius. Eine quellenkritische Studie,' *Rev. bénéd.* 59 (1949) 82-90.

<sup>48</sup> See Altaner, *art. cit.* 87, who suggests that the other Latin version (cf. above, n. 46) was scarcely known in wider circles.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. M. Hélin, *A History of Medieval Latin Literature* (trans. by J. C. Snow, New York 1949) 118.

<sup>50</sup> For numerous illustrations of art depicting St. Antony and his life, see the book by C. Champion, *Saint Antoine Ermite* (L'art et les saints, Paris n. d.).

<sup>51</sup> Published by P. Bedjan, *Acta martyrum et sanctorum* 5 (Paris 1895) 1-121. Cf. also the recension made by the seventh-century monk Anan-Isho: *The Book of Paradise*, ed. by E. A. Budge

(London 1904) 1. 1-108 (Life of St. Anthony, trans.); 2. 1-93 (Syriac text). Cf. Bardenhewer 3. 67 f.

<sup>52</sup> A considerable number of sections have also been translated by Cardinal Newman and interspersed in his two chapters on Antony in *Historical Sketches* 2: *The Church of the Fathers* (New York-Bombay 1906) 94-126.

## TEXT

<sup>1</sup> This heading, preserved in the Evagrian version, is probably the original one: *Athanasius episcopus ad peregrinos fratres*. The heading or title chosen by the Benedictine editors from several appearing in the Greek manuscripts reads: 'The life and conduct of our holy father Antony; composed and sent to the monks abroad by our holy father Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria.'

<sup>2</sup> Here there may be a reminiscence of Xenophon, *Mem.* 4. 1. 1: 'Even the remembrance of him (Socrates), though he is no longer with us, benefits not a little those who were wont to associate with him.'

<sup>3</sup> R. Reitzenstein, *Des Athanasius Werk über das Leben des Antonius* (Sitzungsber. d. Heidelb. Akad. d. Wiss. 8, 1914) 6 f., points to similar commonplaces in Lucian and Ps.-Lucian.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 4 Kings 3. 11, where the same is said of Eliseus' attendance upon Elias. In my translation I follow the preponderance of the Greek MSS, reading *παρὰ τοῦ ἀκολουθήσαντος . . . καὶ ἐπιχέαντος*, instead of *παρ' αὐτοῦ ἀκολουθήσας . . . καὶ ἐπιχέων*, which makes Athanasius the companion and servant of Antony; in other words, according to the former reading Athanasius' principal source is a monk who lived with Antony a long time, while in the latter reading Athanasius is his own primary source. See v. Hertling's excellent defense of the former reading: *Antonius der Einsiedler* (Forsch. z. Gesch. d. innerkirchlichen Lebens 1, Innsbruck 1929) 7 n. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* 1. 13, says he was born at Coma in central Egypt. This may be a confusion arising from the fact that Athanasius repeatedly speaks of the home 'town' or 'village' (*κώμη*) of Antony; see v. Hertling, *op. cit.* 12 n. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Antony consistently despises the higher (Greek) learning: See below, §§ 20, 33, 72.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Gen. 25. 27.

<sup>8</sup> The word used for church: *Κυριακόν* = *Dominicum* = lit. 'that which is the Lord's' = 'the Lord's House.' Cf. the study of F. J. Dölger, 'Kirche als Name für den christlichen Kultbau. Sprach- und Kulturgeschichtliches zu den Bezeichnungen *Κυριακόν*, *οἶκος κυριακός*, *Dominicum*, *basilica*,' *Ant. u. Christ.* 6 (1941) 161-95.



<sup>9</sup> Cf. Matt. 4. 20; 19. 27.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Acts 4. 35-7.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Eph. 1. 18; Col. 1. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Matt. 19. 21.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. St. Augustine's account, *Conf.* 8. 12. 29, of how he recalled this incident in the life of St. Antony and followed the voice admonishing him—*tolle, lege! tolle, lege!*—and found all darkness dispelled when he opened a volume containing St. Paul's epistles and read Rom. 13. 13 f.

<sup>14</sup> The *arura* was 100 Egyptian cubits = 2756 (or 2737?) square meters. We see that also by American standards the farm was of goodly size, approximately 207 acres. See F. Hultsch, 'Arura,' RE 2 (1896) 1491.

<sup>15</sup> Matt. 6. 34.

<sup>16</sup> The *Apophthegmata patrum* 20 (MG 65. 81 C), relate: 'A brother who had renounced the world and distributed his possessions to the poor, but kept back a little for himself, came to the abbot Antony. When he had learned of this, the old man said: "If you wish to become a monk, go to yonder village, buy some meat, put it around your bare body, and then come here." When the brother had done this, the dogs and birds kept hacking away at his body. As he came before him, the old man inquired whether everything had been done as he had suggested. When the other pointed to his body cut to shreds, Antony said: "Those who have renounced the world, but wish to have money are thus attacked and massacred by the demons."'

<sup>17</sup> Here we have the first occurrence of the word *παρθενών* in the Christian sense of, lit. 'a house or group of virgins.' At this early time (ca. 271) women religious generally still lived with their families, though meeting for common exercises; cf. M. Viller-K. Rahner, *Ascese und Mystik in der Väterzeit* (Freiburg i. Br. 1939) 49 f. McLaughlin translates 'sisterhood,' which also leaves it an open question whether in this passage *παρθενών* implies a place or home for religious—a convent. Later in the present biography, § 54, we are told that when Antony's sister had advanced in years in the practice of virginity, she became the superioress of a group of virgins. For further use of the term *παρθενών* by the Fathers, cf. Du Cange, *Gloss. ad script. med. et inf. graecitatis* (Lyons 1688) 1120 f. The word *nonna* = 'nun' appears to have been first used by St. Jerome, *Epist.* 22. 16.

<sup>18</sup> Gal. 4. 18.

<sup>19</sup> Regarding the manual labor of Antony and the other Egyptian monks, see A. T. Geoghegan, *The Attitude towards Labor in Early Christianity and Ancient Culture* (Stud. in Christ. Ant. 6, Washington 1945) 163-174.

<sup>20</sup> 2 Thess. 3. 10.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Matt. 6. 6.

<sup>22</sup> On the necessity of continual prayer, see Tertullian, *De exhort. cast.* 10; Cyprian, *De dom. orat.* 34-6; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 7. 7. 35. 1; Basil, *Epist.* 2 (*Ad Gregorium*). 2; *Hom.* 4 (*In martyrem Iulittam*). 3; Ambrose, *Comm. in Lucam* 7. 6. 88-90; John Chrysostom, *Comm. in Matt. hom.* 22. 5 f.; Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* 37. 14; etc. Of course, our Lord Himself had enjoined the same: Luke 18. 1; 21. 36. See also St. Paul's injunction, 1 Thess. 5. 17: *Pray without ceasing*.

<sup>23</sup> There is a reminiscence here of Luke 8.15—of those who, *hearing the word, keep it*. On the subject of Scripture reading by the ancient monks, see F. Bauer, 'Die Hl. Schrift bei den Mönchen des christlichen Altertums,' *Theol. u. Glaube* 17 (1925) 512-32. It was said of more than one monk that he had learned the Old and New Testaments by heart: cf. Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* 11 (2. 32 Butler): Ammonius; *ibid.* 18 (2.56 Butler): Marcus. Of the Pachomian monks at Tabennesi it is reported by Palladius, *ibid.* 32 (2. 96 Butler), that 'they repeat by heart the entire Scriptures.'

<sup>24</sup> See Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* 18 (2. 47 f. Butler), the account regarding Macarius of Alexandria.

<sup>25</sup> Antony here distills the sum and essence of all virtue—love of Christ and love of neighbor; cf. J. List, *Das Antoniusleben des hl. Athanasius d. Grossen* (Texte u. Forsch. z. byz.-neugr. Philol. 11, Athens 1925) 14. List, *ibid.* n. 4, remarks that in the present passage ten Christian virtues are mentioned as compared with the Aristotelian nine; for another list of ten Christian virtues, see below, § 17.

<sup>26</sup> Antony was eager to learn from all, but not, as v. Hertling appositely remarks (*op. cit.* 23), to best them by any ascetic 'records' of his own. His remarkable spiritual poise and his consideration for the feelings of others will be met with again and again in the pages that follow.

<sup>27</sup> Ὁ μισόκαλος καὶ φθονερός; similarly, below, § 9.

<sup>28</sup> Time and experience have made the Devil a past master of his

invidious craft. See St. Cyprian, *Ad Fortun.* 2: 'Adversarius vetus est et hostis antiquus, cum quo proelium gerimus. Sex millia annorum iam paene complentur, ex quo hominem diabolus in-pugnat. Omnia genera temptandi et artes atque insidias deiciendi usu ipso vetustatis edidicit,' etc. On the manifold wiles and untiring resourcefulness of the Evil One, cf. also Firmicus Maternus, *De err. prof. rel.* 26. 4; Lactantius, *De op. Dei* 1. 7; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* 16. 15; Isidore of Pelusium, *Epist.* 3. 156; Cassian, *Coll.* 7. 9-24; Leo the Great, *Serm.* 16. 3; 89. 3; especially, too, St. Jerome's celebrated description of his experience with temptation while living a solitary life in the desert: *Epist.* 22 (*ad Eustochium*). 7; also *ibid.* 29 and *Epist.* 125 (*ad Rusticum*). 12. See below, nn. 40 and 89. ✓ Rustic

<sup>29</sup> Job 40. 11. <sup>16, 17</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Judith 16. 21; Eccli. 7. 19; Isa. 66. 24; Mark 9. 48 (Greek).

<sup>31</sup> The same sin as that to which he—the serpent—seduced Eve with the words (Gen. 3. 5.): *Eritis sicut dii*, 'You shall be as Gods.'

<sup>32</sup> This assumption of human flesh by the Savior is the topic of Athanasius' *De Incarnatione*; cf. especially chs. 8 and 9.

<sup>33</sup> 1 Cor. 15. 10.

<sup>34</sup> Ps. 111. 10 (the sinner); Mark 9. 17 (a demon).

<sup>35</sup> Black—*ater*, *niger*, μέλας—was not uncommonly used by the Romans and Greeks in a transferred moral sense to designate malice or wickedness (e.g., Cicero, *Pro Caecina* 10. 27; Horace, *Sat.* 1. 4. 81-5; Ovid, *Am.* 1. 13. 35-6; etc.) Early Christian usage is the same: cf. Hermas, *Past. sim.* 9. 1. 5 and 9. 19. 1; Origen, *In Cant. Cant.* hom 1. 6; Methodius of Philippi, *De sang.* 4. 2; etc. The transfer of the color black to the author of all evil and all iniquity—the Devil—was very early and very common. He is called the Black One, ὁ Μέλας, by Ps.-Barnabas, 4. 10 and 20. 1 (cf. ACW 6. 41 and 63; also J. A. Kleist's note 36, p. 171 *ibid.*). Because Ethiopians and Egyptians were black or very dark of skin, the Devil was frequently designated by these national names: see, for instance, the *Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis* 10. 6, 8, 9, 14 (*Aegyptius*); *Acts of Peter* 22 (Ethiopian woman); *Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena* 17 f. (Ethiopian king). On this very interesting subject, see F. J. Dölger, *Die Sonne der Gerechtigkeit und der Schwarze* (Liturgiegesch. Forsch. 2, Münster i. W. 1918) 49-83.

<sup>36</sup> Osee 4. 12.

<sup>37</sup> Ps. 117. 7.

<sup>38</sup> Rom. 8. 3 f.

<sup>39</sup> See 1 Peter 5. 8.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Eph. 6. 11. For a graphic account of the persistence of the evil spirits in temptation, see the story of the monk Moses, who in his earlier years had been a profligate and a robber: Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* 19 (2. 60-62 Butler). Cf. above, n. 28, and below, n. 89.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. 9. 27.

<sup>42</sup> 2 Cor. 12. 10.

<sup>43</sup> Phil. 3. 13.

<sup>44</sup> 3 Kings 17. 1. The word *σήμερον* = 'this day'; from which, according to Athanasius, Antony argued his point, is not found in the original of this verse.

<sup>45</sup> Courage is necessary when dealing with the Devil. See *Pastor Hermae*, mand. 7; mand. 12. 5 f.; Origen, *Cont. Cels.* 8. 36; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* 16. 19; Ambrose, *Exam.* 6. 49; Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* 61. 20.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Rom. 8. 35.

<sup>47</sup> Ps. 26. 3.

<sup>48</sup> In the mythology of the ancients the servants and minions of the gods were often called dogs: thus the Griffins, Harpies, Furies, etc.; cf. Liddell-Scott-Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon* 1. 1015.

<sup>49</sup> God stands by while Antony is tempted. See also Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* 34. 2 f.

<sup>50</sup> The promise was redeemed indeed—see below, § 93.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Acts 8. 20, St. Peter's rejection of money offered by Simon Magus for the gift of imparting the Holy Spirit by the imposition of hands.

<sup>52</sup> This was the 'Outer Mountain' where St. Antony spent twenty years in retirement. It is at Pispir on the east bank of the Nile, about fifty miles south of Memphis. The Nitrian desert lay to the northwest across the Nile, directly south of Alexandria. To the south of Heracleopolis, on both sides of the Nile lay the 'great desert' of the Thebaid, the home of later Egyptian monasticism. See Butler 2.xcviii, for a map of this region in ca. 400 A.D.

<sup>53</sup> In *De Incarn.* 47, Athanasius states that in times past demons hid in various places and terrified people by playing upon their fancy. But that was changed by the appearance of the Divine Word—a mere Sign of the Cross breaks all such spells. Cf. *ibid.* 48; 53; also the present biography §§ 23; 35; also Lactantius, *Epit. div. inst.* 46. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* 13. 3, states that the demons shake with fear when they see the Sign of the Cross made; etc.—Particularly interesting is the testimony by Julian the Apostate,

*Epist.* 79 (93 f. Bidez-Cumont), that the Christians protected themselves against demons by hissing at them and making the Sign of the Cross. See the very lucid passage in Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* 16. 19; also below, n. 146. Cf. F. J. Dölger, 'Heidnische Begrüssung und christliche Verhöhnung der Heidentempel,' *Ant. u. Christ.* 3 (1932) 193-5.—On the terms *σφραγίς* = 'seal,' and *σφραγίζειν* = 'to seal,' 'to impress a seal,' as used here to signify the making of the Sign of the Cross, see F. J. Dölger, *Sphragis* (Stud. z. Gesch. u. Kult. d. Altert. 5. 3-4, Paderborn 1911) 171 f.

<sup>54</sup> Ps. 67. 2 f.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* 117. 10.

<sup>56</sup> Rom. 8. 32.

<sup>57</sup> Not, of course, in our sense, but in the original sense—cells or other habitations of individual *μοναχοί*, *monachi*, 'monks,' or anchorites (from *ἀναχωρεῖν* = to 'withdraw,' 'retire'), who led a lone life, a life for themselves. These were loosely organized and under the spiritual guidance of Antony.

<sup>58</sup> A reminiscence of Heb. 3. 20 and 12. 23.

<sup>59</sup> The canal, here named after the city of Arsinoë, linked up the Nile and Lake Moeris (cf. Herodotus 2. 148). Arsinoë was the chief city of the *nomos* or district of the same name, the Fayûm of today. It lay approximately fifty miles west of Pispir. In the time of Herodotus, who visited it (cf. *ibid.*), it was called Crocodilopolis = 'city of crocodiles.' He speaks of a gigantic labyrinth built there, the lower chambers of which contained the sepulchres of kings and sacred crocodiles. See J. David, 'Aschmoun,' *Dict. d'hist. et de géogr. ecclés.* 4 (1930) 898 f.; R. Pietschmann, 'Arsinoë' no. 3, RE 2 (1896) 1277 f.

<sup>60</sup> This was in Coptic, the popular language of Egypt. It was the only language spoken by Antony: cf. Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* 21 (2. 69 Butler); also G. Bardy, *La question des langues dans l'Eglise ancienne* 1 (Paris 1948) 45 f. See below, n. 244.

<sup>61</sup> Athanasius often speaks of this sufficiency: cf. *Cont. gent.* 1; *Epist. de Syn.* 6; *Epist. ad episc. Aegypti et Libyae* 4.

<sup>62</sup> Ps. 89. 10.

<sup>63</sup> See 1 Cor. 15. 42.

<sup>64</sup> Rom. 8. 18.

<sup>65</sup> See St. Cyprian, *Ad Fortun.* 13; St. Ambrose, *De Iacob et vita beata* 1. 7. 28; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat.* 7. 17; John Chrysostom, *In Epist. ad Rom.* hom. 15. 10.

<sup>66</sup> See Eccle. 2. 18; 4. 8; 6. 2.

<sup>67</sup> St. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* 38. 12, states that there is one way of taking earthly riches with us—by sending them ahead of us, in the hands of the poor.

<sup>68</sup> See Luke 17. 7-10.

- <sup>69</sup> See Ezech. 33. 12 f.

<sup>70</sup> Rom. 8. 28.

<sup>71</sup> 1 Cor. 15. 31. See below, § 91 and n. 294.

<sup>72</sup> See Phil. 3. 13.

<sup>73</sup> See Gen. 19. 26.

<sup>74</sup> Luke 9. 62. Cf. Jerome, *Epist.* 3. 4, concerning the monk Bonosus; *Epist.* 71. 1, to Lucinius who had vowed continence in marriage; *Epist.* 118. 4, urging a rich widower to renounce his wealth completely.

<sup>75</sup> Luke 17. 21.

<sup>76</sup> Jos. 24. 23. 'Jesus' is the Greek form (Ἰησοῦς) of the Hebrew Yēshūa' = 'Joshua' or 'Josue.'

<sup>77</sup> Matt. 3. 3.

<sup>78</sup> James 1. 20.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* 1. 15.

<sup>80</sup> Prov. 4. 23.

<sup>81</sup> Eph. 6. 12.

<sup>82</sup> It was commonly believed in Christian antiquity that the evil spirits used the air as their habitat and as the medium of their nefarious activity (cf. the present biography, 65). St. Paul writes to the Ephesians (2. 2) that in time past they had 'walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of this air'; cf. *ibid.* 6. 12. See Tatian, *Ad Graec.* 15. 8; Athenagoras, *Suppl.* 25. According to St. Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 8. 22, the demons, cast down from Heaven, were punished to live in the air as a dungeon; cf. *ibid.* 8. 15; Cassian, *Coll.* 8. 12; Peter Chrysologus, *Serm.* 9. Cf. E. Mangelot, 'Démon d'après les Pères,' *DTC* 4. 1 (1911) 339-84; J. Quasten, 'A Coptic Counterpart of a Vision in the Acts of Perpetua and Felicitas,' *Byzantion* 15 (1941) 1-9; also the observations by L. A. Arand in *ACW* 3. 123 n. 68.

<sup>83</sup> Origen, *Cont. Cels.* 7. 67, states that the subject of demonology is extensive and difficult.

<sup>84</sup> That is, the pagans.

<sup>85</sup> *Φαυραολαίς*. The Greek religious myths, according to Justin, *Apol.* 1. 54, were inventions of the evil spirits. Christian baptism, of which the demons had heard through the Prophets, was aped

by the pagans in various religious purifications—again by demoniacal inspiration: *ibid.* 2. 62. Theophilus, *Ad Autol.* 2. 8, states that the ancient Greek poets, beginning with Homer and Hesiod, were inspired by phantoms instilled by deceitful spirits. The ancient oracles were the work of the Devil and his demons: cf. *Mart. Carpi, Papyli et Agathon.* 17 (11 Krüger); Origen, *Cont. Cels.* 7. 3-6, 35; 8. 62. Cf. also Lactantius, *Epit. inst. div.* 23.

<sup>86</sup> The ability to discern good and evil spirits (*discretio spirituum*) is a gift of the Holy Spirit: see St. Paul, 1 Cor. 12. 7 and 10. See below, § 35 and n. 125.

<sup>87</sup> 2 Cor. 2. 11.

<sup>88</sup> See Ps. 139. 6.

<sup>89</sup> Of the two most severe trials to which Christians are subjected, persecution and temptation—both the work of the Devil—the latter is the more formidable and dangerous: cf. Leo the Great, *Serm.* 18. 1. Cf. above, nn. 28 and 40.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. above, § 13 and n. 53.

<sup>91</sup> Job 41. 10-13 (Sept.)—description of the leviathan.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* 41. 19, 23 f. (Sept.), again said of the leviathan.

<sup>93</sup> Exod. 15. 9.

<sup>94</sup> Isa. 10. 14. For a similar application of this and the following passage to Satan, see Athanasius, *Epist. ad episc. Aegypti et Libyae* 1. 2.

<sup>95</sup> See Job 40. 25, 26, 29 (Sept.), also with reference to the leviathan. The Syriac writer Isaac of Antioch in a metrical homily on the Devil, *Hom.* 36. 20-30 (1. 454 f. Bedjan), describes him as a roaring lion who frightens men, but cannot harm them because he is muzzled.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. Luke 10. 19.

<sup>97</sup> Hab. 2. 15.

<sup>98</sup> Luke 4. 41.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Jude 6.

<sup>100</sup> Ps. 49. 16.

<sup>101</sup> Ps. 38. 2.

<sup>102</sup> Ps. 37. 14 f.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Athanasius, *De Incarn.* 47 f.; *Epist. ad episc. Aegypti et Libyae* 1. 2; Justin, *Apol.* 2. 5; *Dial.* 45. 3; also Origen, *Cont. Cels.* 1. 31; Augustine, *Enchir.* 14. 50.

<sup>104</sup> John 8. 44.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Eccli. 1. 25 (26).

<sup>106</sup> Cf. 4 Kings 19. 35.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Job 1. 13 ff. and 2. 7.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. *ibid.* 1. 12.

<sup>109</sup> Matt. 8. 31. Cf. Gregory the Great, *Mor.* 2. 10. 16.

<sup>110</sup> Gen. 1. 26 f., 5. 1, 9. 6. The creation of man after God's image and likeness is a favorite topic of St. Athanasius: cf. *Cont. Gent.* 34; *De Incarn.* 3; *Cont. Ar. orat.* 2. 78-80; *Epist. fest.* 2. 2.

<sup>111</sup> Luke 10. 19.

<sup>112</sup> Tertullian, *Apol.* 22. 2, states that this quality—*subtilitas et tenuitas sua*—is of advantage to the demons in their assaults both upon the body and upon the soul of man.

<sup>113</sup> Origen, *Cont. Cel.* 4. 92 f., speaking of the practice of divination and augury, thinks that certain demons, because they are unencumbered by any corporeal substance, have in a measure the faculty of prognosticating future events. In order to seduce the human race away from the true God, they hide themselves in certain animals, for example, serpents and certain types of birds, and employ them to mislead the curious and credulous. See also Tertullian, *Apol.* 23; Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 26 f.; Cyprian, *Quod idola dii non sint* 7; Lactantius, *Div. inst.* 2. 17; Peter Chrysologus, *Serm.* 5; etc.

<sup>114</sup> Dan. 13. 42.

<sup>115</sup> The Nile, to the Egyptian that which makes Egypt, in much the same sense that to the Roman *Urbs* ('the City') was Rome. Interestingly enough, in the Hebrew Old Testament the Nile is never referred to by name, but termed simply, as here, 'the River.'

<sup>116</sup> The primitive, materialistic conception of the demons and their activity is quite apparent; cf. A. Robertson's pertinent note to H. Ellershaw's translation of the previous section, § 31. Regarding the present passage, we can well agree with the remarks by Viller-Rahner, *op. cit.* 86: 'That the Devil plays a quite too prominent role in these discourses will surprise no one who is familiar with the literature of the time. It is quite in point to take it good-humoredly when we are told that a demon, equipped as he is with a body lighter than man's, is capable of unusually swift locomotion and can foreannounce by several hours or days the floods of the Nile from having observed them in Ethiopia.' Regarding what some find to be 'ridiculous' or even 'buffoonish,' but others regard as good-naturedly and wholesomely 'humorous' in the ancient accounts of the desert monks versus the Devil, see the excellent observations by



Henri Brémond in his introduction to Jean Brémond, *Les pères du désert* (Paris 1927) 1.xxvii-xxx; also v. Hertling, *op. cit.* 56.

<sup>117</sup> 2 Kings 18. 24.

<sup>118</sup> That is, David; 'The man coming' = Achimaas, followed by Chusai; because actually there were two men approaching, Evagrius uses the plural—*venientes*.

<sup>119</sup> See also Athanasius, *De Incarn.* 47, where the various oracles are mentioned by name.

<sup>120</sup> On the soul's 'natural state' (cf. also above, § 20), see P. Resch, *La doctrine ascétique des premiers maîtres égyptiens du quatrième siècle* (Paris 1931) 5-13.

<sup>121</sup> See below, §§ 59, 62.

<sup>122</sup> 4 Kings 5. 26.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.* 6. 17.

<sup>124</sup> See Col. 2. 15.

<sup>125</sup> On distinguishing good and evil spirits, see above, § 22 and n. 86. Cf. Hermas, *Past. mand.* 5; Origen, *De princ.* 3. 2. 4 and 3. 3. 4. See Viller-Rahner, *op. cit.* 75; Resch, *op. cit.* 95-99.

<sup>126</sup> Matt. 12. 19 (see Isa. 42. 2).

<sup>127</sup> 'Ἀκύμαυροι, a highly poetic metaphor of the calm sea undisturbed by any waves—'waveless.'

<sup>128</sup> Luke 1. 13.

<sup>129</sup> Matt. 28. 5.

<sup>130</sup> Luke 2. 10. The most eminent example, of Gabriel reassuring the Blessed Virgin—*Fear not Mary* (Luke 1. 30)—is referred to two paragraphs further on.

<sup>131</sup> John 8. 56.

<sup>132</sup> Θεοτόκος, *Dei genetrix*, *deipara*, the celebrated title and term which had been employed for a long period to express Mary's motherhood, when in the first half of the fifth century it was attacked and defended in the Nestorian controversies and defined in the Council of Ephesus (431). According to the historian Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* 7. 32, the title had already been used by Origen; however, it is not found in the wreckage of the great Alexandrian's works. The first surviving record of the use of the title appears to be a letter by St. Alexander, bishop of Alexandria (313-28): cf. *Epist.* 1. 12 (= Rouët de Journal, *Enchiridion Patristicum*, 9th ed., no. 680). Alexander is followed by Eusebius of Caesarea and numerous other Fathers who employed the title as a common designation for the Blessed Mother. For the patristic evidence, see E.

Dublanchy, 'Marie, maternité divine: enseignement patristique' DTC 9. 2. (1927) 2349-55 (Athanasius: 2351 f.); also V. Schweitzer, 'Alter des Titels Θεοτόκος,' *Katholik* 3 ser. 17 (1903) 97-113.

<sup>133</sup> Luke 1. 41.

<sup>134</sup> See above, n. 130.

<sup>135</sup> Matt. 4. 9.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.* 4. 10. See Deut. 13. 4.

<sup>137</sup> Σημεῖα, lit. 'signs,' a word often used in the New Testament (other words used: τέρατα and δυνάμεις—all three occur in Acts 2. 22 and 2 Cor. 12. 12) to designate Christ's miracles: Matt. 12. 38; 16. 1; Luke 23. 8; John 2. 11; 6. 26; etc.

<sup>138</sup> Luke 10. 20.

<sup>139</sup> Matt. 7. 22.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.* 7. 23.

<sup>141</sup> See Ps. 1. 6.

<sup>142</sup> See 1 John 4. 1.

<sup>143</sup> Ps. 19. 8.

<sup>144</sup> Ps. 37. 14.

<sup>145</sup> See above, n. 57.

<sup>146</sup> For this passage, see F. J. Dölger, *Die Sonne der Gerechtigkeit und der Schwarze* 23 n. 1; also above, n. 35. Of numerous similar accounts of blowing one's breath or hissing at demons, the following quoted by Dölger (*Ant. u. Christ.* 3 [1932] 195) from H. Rosweyde, *Vitae Patrum* (2nd ed. Antwerp 1628) 379, may serve as an example. Pelagia, a penitent from Antioch, continued to be harassed by a demon even after she had been baptized. Bishop Nonnus advised her: 'Bless yourself with the Cross of Christ and renounce him.' This she did and the demon left her at once. But when during the night the demon began to molest her again, Pelagia rid herself of him in the following manner: "Then Pelagia, the servant maid of God, blessed herself with the Sign of the Cross and blew a breath at the demon, saying: "May my God who has liberated me from your teeth and who has led me into His heavenly bridal chamber, resist you for me." And the Devil disappeared instantly.' See above, n. 53.

<sup>147</sup> See Rom. 8. 35.

<sup>148</sup> Luke 10. 18.

<sup>149</sup> 1 Cor. 4. 6.

<sup>150</sup> On the Devil quoting Scripture, see Matt. 4. 6; Cassian, *Coll.* 1. 20 f.; *De Incarn.* 7. 16. See above, § 25.

<sup>151</sup> See above, § 14.

<sup>152</sup> Gregory the Great, *Mor.* 14. 13. 15, describes the Devil as an excellent psychologist who carefully surveys the temperament and inclinations of each prospective victim and chooses and sets his snares accordingly. Gregory also states pointedly (*ibid.* 2. 13. 22) that the Devil not only plots what to do, but when to do it.

<sup>153</sup> See Rom. 12. 12.

<sup>154</sup> Προσδοκῶντας, 'looking forward to,' 'expecting': an illustration of the belief often expressed in the Fathers, that the punishment with hell-fire had not yet begun, or at least had been interrupted, and, therefore, still lay ahead for Satan and his demons. Evidently this belief was based in good part on the account in the Apocalypse, especially Ch. 20, of Satan's war against the Church and of the Last Judgment (cf. 20. 9 f.: Satan and Antichrist are cast into the everlasting torment of fire and brimstone); on the account in the Apocalypse, see especially St. Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 20. 7-14. Justin Martyr, *Apol.* 1. 28, states that Christ foretold that Satan and his minions would be condemned to fire; in fact, according to the testimony of Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* 5. 26. 3 Harvey), Justin held that prior to Christ's coming Satan abstained from blaspheming God because he was not yet aware of his condemnation. Tertullian, *Apol.* 27. 3, speaks of a delay in the punishment (*poenae mora*) of the demons; but adds that when they begin to serve their sentence, this will be all the more severe because of their part in fomenting the persecution of the Christians. St. Ambrose, *Comm. in Lucam* 6. 41, thinks that the demons who begged the Lord's permission to enter a herd of swine (Luke 8. 32), did so because they knew that at His coming glory they would be cast into the abysses of hell. Gregory of Nyssa, finally, appears to believe that after many centuries of purification the demons will be saved; see *Dial. de an. et ress.* 9. 2, and elsewhere. For further patristic evidence, cf. E. Mangenot, 'Démon d'après les Pères,' DTC 4. 1 (1911) 339-84.

<sup>155</sup> See Matt. 25. 41.

<sup>156</sup> See Jos. 5. 13 f.—Josue's vision of the warrior near Jericho.

<sup>157</sup> See Dan. 13. 51-59—Daniel questioning the two wicked elders.

<sup>158</sup> Antiquity's hatred and contempt for the class of tax-collectors was notorious. This was especially true of the little native officials serving as collectors for the entrepreneurs to whom the taxes were farmed out: cf. Cicero, *De off.* 1. 52. 150; Lucian, *Necyom.* 11;

Philo, *Spec. leg.* 2. 93; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat.* 19. 14 (where the apothegm: 'War is the father of taxes!'). For Egypt, see T. Frank, *An Economic History of Rome* (2nd ed. Baltimore 1927) 391-4. On this subject see also the informative article by H. C. Youtie, 'Publicans and Sinners,' *Mich. Alum. Quart. Rev.* 43 (1937) 650-62.

For a remarkable encomium of monastic Egypt—'this desert become fairer than any paradise'—see John Chrysostom, *In Matt.* hom. 8. 4 f. This Egypt, it is said, is proud of the lowly fisherman, and 'Everywhere they sing the praises of the *publican* and tent-maker'! On the other hand, we find St. Basil, the great protector of monks, making a most urbane plea (*Epist.* 284) with an assessor that he exempt them from taxation. He argues that if they are true monks, they own neither money nor bodies of their own: the former is spent in helping the needy, the latter is worn away by prayer and fasting. Cf. G. F. Reilly, *Imperium and Sacerdotium according to St. Basil the Great* (Stud. in Christ. Ant. 7, Washington 1945) 98 f.

<sup>159</sup> Num. 24. 5 f.

<sup>160</sup> See John 14. 2.

<sup>161</sup> Cf. the first sentence in Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*: 'Plotinus, the philosopher who lived in our day, appeared to be ashamed of being in a body.'

<sup>162</sup> Luke 12. 22 and 29-31, with slight borrowings from the parallel passage in Matthew, 6. 31-33.

<sup>163</sup> When in the year 305 Diocletian and Maximianus abdicated as Emperors (*Augusti*), Constantius and Galerius succeeded them, and Severus and Maximin Daja (nephew of Galerius) were appointed Caesars. Maximin received the administration of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. He was especially active in continuing the persecution of the Christians undertaken by Diocletian. Abetted by Galerius, this persecution lasted till the year 311. Celebrated victims of his cunning and savage cruelty included the martyrs Pamphilus of Caesarea, revered teacher of Eusebius, the bishop Methodius of Philippi (Olympus?), and Peter, bishop of Alexandria (see below, n. 169). On the persecution, see Eusebius, *De martyribus Palaestinae*, a supplement to bk. 8 of his *Ecclesiastical History*. See P. Allard, *La persécution de Dioclétien et la triomphe de l'Eglise* (2nd ed. Paris 1900) 166-205 and *passim*; A. Ehrhard, *Die Kirche der Märtyrer* (Munich 1932) 91 ff.

<sup>164</sup> On Antony's conduct in Alexandria and the historicity of the present episode, see v. Hertling, *op. cit.* 71 f.

<sup>165</sup> This recalls an incident told by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* 5. 1. 49) concerning the conduct of a prominent physician, Alexander, during the persecution of the Christians in Gaul (A.D. 177/8). At a final hearing for such Christians as had already abjured their faith and who were to be set free, the court found that these abjured their former abjuration. Alexander had posted himself near the tribunal, where the mob saw him gesticulating to the prisoners, thus encouraging them to give witness for the faith. Cf. J. C. Plumpe, *Mater Ecclesia* (Stud. in Christ. Ant. 5, Washington 1943) 38.

<sup>166</sup> In other words, he changed the appearance of a monk to that of an Egyptian civilian. The Syriac version of Palladius' *Book of Paradise* (1. 57 Budge) adds that he 'made white the apparel with which he was clothed.' V. Hertling, *loc. cit.*, suggests that he may also have cut away his beard.

<sup>167</sup> Antony's own life of asceticism came to be looked upon as equivalent to martyrdom: cf. R. Reitzenstein, *Des Athanasius Werk über das Leben des Antonius* 19 n. 2. On the subject of equivalents for martyrdom and of the tendency of hagiographers to show that their unmartyred heroes had led lives as good and as heroic as the martyrs, see H. Delehaye, *Sanctus* (Stud. hagiogr. 17, Brussels 1927) 109-21: 'Du martyr au confesseur.'

<sup>168</sup> See Heb. 13. 3.

<sup>169</sup> Peter became bishop of Alexandria probably in the year 300 and was executed on November 25, 311. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 9. 6. 2, calls him 'an extraordinarily fine bishop, both for his life of virtue and for his competence in the Sacred Scriptures.' Of his writings only fragments remain. Cf. Bardenhewer 2. 239-470; G. Fritz, 'Pierre d'Alexandrie,' *DTC* 12. 1 (1935) 1802-4.

<sup>170</sup> Jerome, *Vita S. Hilar.* 4, relates that Antony dismissed the boy monk Hilarion with the gift of such a garment of skins.

<sup>171</sup> Porphyry, *Vita Plot.* 2, relates the same of Plotinus. Instances of the practice as recounted by Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* are: 1 (2. 15 Butler), the Alexandrian priest Isidore; 38 (2. 122 Butler), the Iberian deacon Evagrius. The Palestinian solitary, Hilarion, never washed the sackcloth he wore—so Jerome, *Vita S. Hilar.* 10. See also Serapion of Thmuis, *Ep. ad mon.* 2; Gerontius, *Vita S. Melaniae iun.* 2; Diadochus, *Cap. cent. de perf. spir.* 50 f. The

shunning of the bath was, of course, bound up with the motive of performing penance; but at the basis of this form of asceticism lay also a profound abhorrence of the notorious licentiousness prevalent in the pagan public baths: cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 3. 5; John Chrysostom, *In Matt. hom.* 7. 6 f.; etc. On ancient asceticism and bathing, see J. Zellinger, *Bad und Bäder in der altchristlichen Kirche* (Munich 1928) 47-92.

<sup>172</sup> Luke 11. 9.

<sup>173</sup> This reminds us of the ancient practice known as *incubation*. Persons desirous of receiving a vision or relief from sickness slept within the precincts of a temple. The practice, for which various observances and rites (fasting, sleeping on certain pelts, etc.) were prescribed, was particularly prevalent in the temples of Asclepius (god of health), and later spread to the shrines of Isis and Serapis. See J. Pley, 'Inkubation,' RE 9 (1916) 1256-62; R. Herzog, *Die Wunderheilungen von Epidaurus* (Philologus Supplementb. 22. 3, Leipzig 1931) 139-160. Cf. J. Quasten, *Theol. Rev.* 30 (1931) 540 f.; A. Chaudre, 'Inkubation,' LTK 5 (1933) 406 f.

<sup>174</sup> See 2 Cor. 12. 4.

<sup>175</sup> Τὰ Βουκόλια, a swampy district in the Nile delta inhabited by herdsmen; cf. K. Sethe, 'βουκόλοι,' RE 3 (1898) 1013. Here the 'voice' intimates that Antony had reflected not only on going in a southerly direction, but also on heading to the north.

<sup>176</sup> Originally a tribe in Arabia, probably mentioned already by Pliny, *Nat. hist.* 6. 32. 157 (as *Araceni*). Saracens later became synonymous with Arabs and in the time of the Crusades the name was used for Moslems.

<sup>177</sup> Mount Colzim, lying in the open desert on the South Qalala Plateau, approximately 100 miles south-east of Cairo, 75 miles east of the Nile, and 20 miles west of the Red Sea. The mountain, with the ancient Monastery of St. Antony, is still called Dêr Mar Antonios. See P. F. Anson, *The Quest of Solitude* (London 1932) 15 f. Antiquity has preserved for us a detailed description of the locality, specifically of the 'Inner Mountain,' in St. Jerome's *Vita S. Hilarionis* (30 f.). See also v. Hertling, *op. cit.* 35-43. Regarding the remark that Antony 'fell in love with the place,' the same is reported by St. Jerome with respect to Paul of Thebes when he had found his mountain cave: *Vita S. Pauli* 6.

<sup>178</sup> One of the stock incidents of hagiography. See Jerome, *Vita S. Hilar.* 31, a replica of the present narrative, though Antony is

there described as thrashing the wild ass he had caught. The *Acta SS* for August, VI (1868) 72. 36, tells of a great number of wild boars which are abjured by St. Caesarius of Arles to leave the neighborhood of his monastery. On animal stories as a characteristic of the records of the Egyptian monks, cf. W. H. Mackean, *Christian Monasticism in Egypt to the Close of the Fourth Century* (London 1920) 137.

<sup>179</sup> The terminology of the ancient athletic events is used metaphorically by St. Paul (Eph. 6. 12; 1 Cor. 2. 24; Phil. 3. 14; 2 Tim. 4. 7; etc.) and the early Christian writers to portray the life of effort and trial which a Christian must take upon himself if he wishes to get to Heaven. See especially St. Basil's panegyrics on the martyrs, *passim*. On the saints as God's athletes, see H. Delehaye, *Les passions des martyres et les genres littéraires* (Brussels 1921) 211 f. See the articles 'ἀγών' and 'ἀθλητής' in TWNT I (1933); also F. J. Dölger, 'Der Kampf mit dem Aegypter in der Perpetua-Vision,' *Ant. u. Christ.* 3 (1932) 177-88; E. L. Hummel, *The Concept of Martyrdom according to St. Cyprian of Carthage* (Stud. in Christ. Ant. 9, Washington 1946) 79-87.

<sup>180</sup> See Eph. 6. 12.

<sup>181</sup> Ps. 124. 1.

<sup>182</sup> See Job 5. 23.

<sup>183</sup> See Ps. 34. 16.

<sup>184</sup> Χριστοῦ δοῦλος, as St. Paul frequently calls himself: Rom. 1. 1; Phil. 1. 1; Gal. 1. 10.

<sup>185</sup> That is, the word (Word) 'Christ.'

<sup>186</sup> One can scarcely be impressed by the erudition of K. Heussi, *Der Ursprung des Mönchtums* (Tübingen 1936) 98, when he remarks that 'here there is an echo of an old *legendary motif*' (*italics mine*) and refers to the Old Testament miracle of the rock struck by Moses.

<sup>187</sup> See Rom. 1. 12.

<sup>188</sup> See Prov. 24. 15 (Sept.).

<sup>189</sup> Eph. 4. 26.

<sup>190</sup> 2 Cor. 13. 5.

<sup>191</sup> Daily examination of conscience, not entirely unknown to the pagan mind (see Seneca, *De ira* 3. 36. 1-3; *Epist.* 83. 2), was often recommended by the Fathers: see St. Basil, *Serm. ascet.* 1. 5; St. John Chrysostom, *In Matt. hom.* 42. 3 f.; *In Epist. ad Heb.* 9. 5; St. John Climacus, *Scala parad.* 4. The examination is prominently

mentioned in the monastic rules. Cf. G. Sepiéter, *L'examen de conscience* (2nd ed. Lille 1932).

<sup>192</sup> See 1 Cor. 4. 5; Rom. 2. 16.

<sup>193</sup> Gal. 6. 2.

<sup>194</sup> 1 Cor. 9. 27.

<sup>195</sup> A Roman name, as is the name of the town from which Fronto is said to have come. Though there were at least two towns in ancient Italy that went by the name Palatium, the further, normal meaning of the word as 'palace,' 'court,' suggests that the man, otherwise unknown, was a Roman official or employee connected with the palace of the Roman prefect in Alexandria.

<sup>196</sup> It seems quite impossible to unscramble this combination of town and province. There were several towns in Egypt called Busiris (cf. F. Hiller v. Gaertringen, 'Busiris,' RE 3. 1 [1897] 1073-7); and besides the province so named in northern Africa, there were in antiquity several groups of towns or communities that went by the name Tripolis (cf. 'Tripolis' RE 2. R., 7. 1 [1939] 202-10: Nos. 8 [E. Kirsten], 9 and 10 [F. Bölte]); but a Busiris in Tripoli(s) appears to be simply bad geography on the part of Athanasius.

<sup>197</sup> See Matt. 9. 20.

<sup>198</sup> The name Paphnutius was most common in Egypt of the fourth century. There are at least a half-dozen bishops and monks by that name, and sometimes it is quite impossible to establish which Paphnutius is meant in certain ancient data; see Butler 2. 224; H. I. Bell, *Jews and Christians in Egypt* (London 1924) 101. In the present instance, however, the addition of the title 'confessor' makes it quite certain that the bishop of the Upper Thebaid who was tortured under Maximian (so Evagrius and Rufinus—Sozomen reads Maximin) is referred to. He had lost his right eye and his left knee was maimed. He was highly honored at the great Council of Nicaea and took a prominent part in it. Cf. Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 1. 8 and 11; Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* 1. 4; Theodoret, *Hist. Eccl.* 1. 6. See Acta SS Sept. III (1868) 778-87; J. Hefele-H. Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles* 1. 1 (Paris 1907) 429 f., and 620-4; M. M. Hassett, 'Paphnutius,' *Cath. Encycl.* 11 (1911) 457.

<sup>199</sup> On 'second sight' and similar endowments of the desert solitaries, cf. E. W. Watson, 'Palladius and Egyptian Monasticism,' *Church Quart. Rev.* 64 (1907) 123 f.

<sup>200</sup> The story of Amoun (also Amon, Ammon, originally the name



of an Egyptian deity) is told by Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* 8 (2. 26-29 Butler). He was an orphan of a prominent family, and married at the insistence of his uncle. He and his wife lived a life of virginity for eighteen years, whereupon, at her suggestion, he left her (A.D. 320-330) to become a monk in the Nitrian desert west of the Nile delta. He lived there for twenty years till his death, having visited his wife twice annually. By the end of the fourth century the desert of Nitria held five thousand disciples of Amoun. The incidents related by Athanasius in the present section are also adverted to by Palladius. See also *Hist. monach. in Aegypto* 29. 1 (90 Preuschen); Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 4. 23; Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* 1. 14 and 6. 28; cf. also Acta SS Oct. II (1866) 413-22; Mackean, *op. cit.* 81 f.; J. P. Kirsch, 'Ammon,' LTK 1 (1930) 367.

<sup>201</sup> The Venerable Bede relates a similar incident regarding St. Cuthbert: *Vita Cuthberti* 4.

<sup>202</sup> Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* 8 (28 f. Butler), and Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* 1. 14, state that this was a canal branching out from the Nile—probably at Lycopolis in Upper Egypt.

<sup>203</sup> A favorite name with the desert monks, and the identity of Amoun's companion escapes detection.

<sup>204</sup> Matt. 14. 29.

<sup>205</sup> On the ancient metaphor of death as a sleep and the note of cheer and hope attaching to it for the early Christians (note also *κοιμητήριον* = 'cemetery,' lit. 'a sleeping place'), cf. A. C. Rush, *Death and Burial in Christian Antiquity* (Stud. in Christ. Ant. 1, Washington 1941) 1-22: 'Death as a Sleep.'—For further 'same day and hour' incidents, see Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* 4 (2. 20 f. Butler): Didymus the Blind regarding the death of Julian the Apostate; Theodoret, *Hist. Eccl.* 3. 19: the monk Julianus regarding the death of the same.

<sup>206</sup> Perhaps the high official who assisted Athanasius in unmasking some of the machinations of the Eusebians and Meletians at the Synod of Tyre in the year 335; see Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles* 1. 2 (1907) 656-66. The title given to Archelaus, *κόμης*, transliterated from the Latin *comes* (hence the English 'count'), was an imperial designation for officials of various ranks. The statement by Rufinus, *Hist. Eccl.* 1. 16, that the Archelaus mentioned was *comes Orientis*, the governor of the Orient, is accepted by R. Reitzenstein, 'Archelaos' no. 31, RE 2. 1 (1895) 452 f., but seriously doubted by Bell, *op. cit.* 67.

<sup>207</sup> Polycratia as a woman's name occurs rather frequently in ancient Greek inscriptions (cf. W. Pape—G. F. Benseler, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennamen* [2nd ed. Braunschweig 1884] s.v.); but apparently it is not found with the ancient hagiographers. It is not clear either which Laodicea is meant: there were a number of cities by that name, the most prominent of which lay in Syria and Phrygia.

<sup>208</sup> *Χριστοφόρος* ('Christopher' — 'Christ-bearer') had been in use as a title for the good Christian since Ignatius of Antioch (cf. *Ad Ephes.* 92, and J. A. Kleist in *ACW* 1 [1946] 64 and 122 with n. 27). The designation probably has its roots in St. Paul, *Gal.* 3. 27: 'As many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ.' During the persecutions it became a favorite title for the martyrs: Christ resides in them, their courage and ability to suffer are from Him, it is He who fights and is victorious in them. In the fourth century, with the end of the persecutions and the rise of monasticism, the title was given especially to men and women ascetics (many parallels between martyrdom and asceticism were seen). Cf. the most interesting papyrus letter reproduced and translated by Bell, *op. cit.* 108 f. Here a certain Valeria, suffering from a serious case of asthma, addresses herself to a monk Paphnuthius, calling him *Χριστοφόρος*. She states: 'I trust by your prayers to obtain healing, for by ascetics and devotees revelations are manifested.' See the excellent study by F. J. Dölger, 'Christophoros als Ehrentitel für Martyrer und Heilige im christlichen Altertum,' *Ant. u. Christ.* 4 (1933) 73-80.

<sup>209</sup> Here called *ἐνεργούμενος*. In ancient Christian times the *energumeni* were persons subject to demoniacal disturbances. Insanity and epilepsy were also ascribed to such influence. In the fourth century the *energumeni* constituted a special class of the Church's subjects, standing between the catechumens and the penitents; a very detailed ritual of exorcism was also developed. See J. Sauer, 'Energumenen,' *LTK* 3 (1931) 671 f.; H. Leclercq, 'Exorcisme, Exorciste' *DACL* 5. 1 (1922) 964-78; for their place in the liturgy, J. Quasten, *Monumenta eucharistica et liturgica vetustissima* (Bonn 1935) Index s.v.

<sup>210</sup> See Luke 11. 24.

<sup>211</sup> Dividing the day into twelve hours, of shorter or longer duration according to the season of the year, this appears to have been between one and three o'clock in the afternoon.

<sup>212</sup> On ecstasy (*ἔκστασις*, in the ancient concept = the soul 'stepping out' of the body temporarily), see Tertullian, *De anima* 45. 3, and the notes by J. H. Waszink, *Quinti Septimi Florentis Tertulliani De Anima* (Amsterdam 1947) 484 f.; also Augustine, *Serm.* 12. 4. 4, and the *Apophthegmata Patrum: De Abb. Silvano* (MG 65. 408C). Cf. F. Pfister, 'Ekstasis,' in the *Festschrift* for F. J. Dölger: *Pisciculi. Studien zur Religion und Kultur des Altertums* (Münster i. W. 1939) 178-91.

<sup>213</sup> Cf. A. C. Rush, *op. cit.* 32-43.

<sup>214</sup> Eph. 2. 2.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.* 6. 13.

<sup>216</sup> Titus 2. 8.

<sup>217</sup> 2 Cor. 12. 2.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.* 12. 2.

<sup>219</sup> See Isa. 54. 13; John 6. 45; 1 Thess. 4. 9.

<sup>220</sup> Because he had the gift of discerning the promptings of good and evil spirits—see above, nn. 86 and 125. Cf. above, § 49: Antony was 'used to hearing such calls often.'

<sup>221</sup> See Dan. 9. 23.

<sup>222</sup> See Luke 24. 45.

<sup>223</sup> The ancient concept of the soul as something spiritual, or as something immaterial or nearly immaterial, is perhaps best illustrated by the effort, both pagan and Christian, to represent it in art, on tombstones and other monuments. Attempts to picture the soul as a phantom (*εἰδωλον*), representations of it as a minute being—frequently with wings—and similar portrayals document this concept of the soul's nature and its flight from the body at the moment of death. See the materials, with illustrations, offered in the article by H. Leclercq: 'Ame,' *DACL* 1. 1 (1924) 1470-554 (particularly interesting the monument, col. 1481, of a departed Christian infant, showing her fitted with Icarian wings!). The conviction of the ancients, both pagan and Christian, that when death occurs, the soul is beset by grave dangers, was symbolized—in literature (e.g. Origen, *In Luc. hom.* 23; Macarius, *Hom.* 22 and 43; Cyril of Alex., *De exitu an. hom.* 14; etc.) and art—by dragons, lions, and other demoniacal representations: cf. especially A. C. Rush, *op. cit.* 23-43; also J. Quasten, 'Der Gute Hirte in frühchristlicher Totenliturgie und Grabeskunst,' in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati* 1 (Studi e testi 121, Vatican City 1946) 373-406: Christ in ancient Christian art is shown as the *psychopompos*, the

Guide and Protector of souls on their dangerous passage into eternity.

<sup>224</sup> Τὸν κανόνα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, that is, the validly and officially appointed clergy of varying (hierarchic) rank in the performance of their ministry. For the history of the important term κανών (κανονικός, canon, canonicus) since its use in the New Testament (2 Cor. 10. 13, 15, 16; Gal. 6. 16) and during the first centuries of the Church (beginning with Clement of Rome 7. 2), see H. W. Beyer, TWNT 3 (1938) s.v., 600-606; F. Cabrol, 'Canon romain,' DACL 2. 2 (1925) 1847 f. ('le mot canon'); also H. Oppel, Κανών. Zur Bedeutungsgeschichte des Wortes und seiner lateinischen Entsprechungen; regula - norma (Leipzig 1937); J. P. Christopher, ACW 2. 109 n. 89.

<sup>225</sup> The word (κλήρος, κληρικός, clerus, clericus) appears to occur first in Tertullian (*De monog.* 12) and Origen (*In Jer. hom.* 11. 3). Cf. B. Dolhagaray, 'Clercs,' DTC 3. 1 (1908) 225-35.

<sup>226</sup> It should be remembered that only a very few monks were also priests or in sacred orders at all (see Viller-Rahner, *op. cit.* 198 f.). The life of independence they led in the desert and their life of asceticism as compared with the life of the clergy serving the needs of the people in the world could easily prompt them to think little of the 'seculars.' Elsewhere, *Epist. ad Dracont.* 9, Athanasius suggests that monks must not depreciate the secular clergy. Among the canons issued by a synod held against the Priscillianists at Saragossa, Spain, in or about 380, no. 6 prescribes that a cleric who out of pride turns monk, supposing this to be a better observance of the law, shall be excommunicated (Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles* 1. 2 [1907] 987).

<sup>227</sup> Antony, in other words, possessed in a very high degree Christian ἀπάθεια—perfect self-control, freedom from passion—the ideal of every true monk and ascetic striving for perfection. Christ, who was free from every emotional weakness and fault—ἀπαθής Χριστός—is his model (see Athanasius, *De Incarn.* 54). He is farthest from Stoic apathy, he loves God intensely, he is not indifferent toward his fellow man but his fellow man's happiness is his joy; as Evagrius Ponticus, *De orat.* 122, states: 'Blessed the monk who joyfully regards the welfare and progress of all men as his own.' Cf. Viller-Rahner, *op. cit.* 107 f. The concept of Christian ἀπάθεια was first developed by Clement of Alexandria (e.g. *Paed.* 1. 2; *Strom.* 6. 9) and his pupil Origen (e.g. *In Jerem.* 5. 8 f.). On Christian ἀπάθεια

among the Fathers, especially, too, the ancient writers on asceticism—Evagrius, Palladius, John Climacus, etc.—see J. Stiglmayr, *Sachliches und Sprachliches bei Makarius* (Innsbruck 1912) 66 ff.; also P. de Labriolle, in Fliche-Martin, *Histoire de l'Eglise* 3 (1936) 336-8.

<sup>228</sup> Prov. 15. 13.

<sup>229</sup> Gen. 31. 5.

<sup>230</sup> See 1 Kings 16. 12.

<sup>231</sup> Named after Meletius, bishop of Lycopolis in Egypt (ca. 325) and not to be confused with the Antiochene bishop and schism a half century later. The earlier Meletian schism seems to have originated from Meletius' disagreement with Peter, bishop of Alexandria, over the treatment of the lapsed during the Decian persecution, and also from Meletius' arrogation of the right to ordain priests and bishops to replace the imprisoned clergy. The Council of Nicaea took measures against him. His followers now went into the camp of the Arians and became especially prominent in the bitter struggles against our present reporter on them—St. Athanasius. This is vividly documented in the records of the Synod of Tyre in 335 (see above, n. 206). Cf. E. Amann, 'Mélèce de Lycopolis,' DTC 10. 1 (1928) 531-6.

<sup>232</sup> An old Gnostic heresy named after its founder Mani whose approximate dates are 216 and 275. A conglomerate of Zoroastrian, Hellenistic, and Christian elements, Manichaeism spread to practically all Christianized countries and survived in certain parts of Asia into the Middle Ages. Perhaps its most celebrated disciple was the young Augustine of Tagaste. See G. Bardy, 'Manichéisme,' DTC 9. 2 (1927) 1841-95.

<sup>233</sup> *Εὐσεβεία* (*εὐσεβής*), used here, and *ἀσεβεία* (*ἀσεβής*) found below, lit. meaning 'piety' and 'impiety,' regularly stand for 'orthodoxy' and 'heterodoxy'; cf. Card. Newman's remarks, *Select Treatises*, etc.—see the following note—2 (9th impression London 1903) 410 f.

<sup>234</sup> The great heresy of the fourth century, named after Arius, who was born in Libya in the second half of the third century, was ordained priest by bishop Achilles of Alexandria, and died suddenly in 336. The history of this Christological heresy, which denied both the divinity and the humanity of Christ, also contains the life story of St. Athanasius, whose bitter struggles of more than four decades with the heresy date from the time he was deacon at

Alexandria; and still one of the best for the study of both, Arianism and Athanasius, is Cardinal Newman in his two works: *The Arians of the Fourth Century*, first published in 1833, and *Select Treatises of St. Athanasius in Controversy with the Arians*, which first appeared in 1842 and 1844 as a translation with notes and constituting volumes 8 and 19 of the series *A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church*, and in 1881 was published apart, again in two volumes, the first of which contained a freer version of the text, and the second an appendix consisting of nearly five hundred pages of articles of varying length on theological subjects and terms. For more recent treatment of the heresy, cf. A. Stohr, 'Arianismus,' LTK 1 (1930) 635-41; G. Bardy, in Fliche-Martin, *Histoire de l'Eglise* 3 (Paris 1936) 69 ff.

<sup>235</sup> Athanasius has *Δεισιδαιμονία*, a name used not only by him, but by the emperor Constantine and the general Church for the followers of Arius. While it most obviously designates 'the followers of the madness of Arius,' 'the Arius-crazy,' the title also implies the fanaticism with which the heresy spread and maintained itself; for this and further touches of meaning, see the discussion and wealth of material in Card. Newman's note, *Select Treatises* (9th impression) 2. 377-9.

<sup>236</sup> There is very good authority for believing that this brief visit to Alexandria was made shortly before July 27, 337 or 338; cf. v. Hertling, *op. cit.* 73 n. 1. Antony's activity there against the Arians is described briefly by Theodoret, *Hist. Eccl.* 4. 27.

<sup>237</sup> Ἦν ποτε, ὅτε οὐκ ἦν (see, too, above—ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων ἐστίν = 'He has His existence from non-existence'), the celebrated formula of Arius as recorded in the encyclical letter of Bishop Alexander of Alexandria and preserved by Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 1. 6; cf. the heresiarch's own letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia, preserved by Theodoret, *Hist. Eccl.* 1. 5. 3.

<sup>238</sup> 2 Cor. 6. 14.

<sup>239</sup> Rom. 1. 25.

<sup>240</sup> Χριστομάχος, like θεομάχος = 'fighting against God' (cf. Acts 5. 39, also 23. 9). Both terms are used very frequently by Athanasius and others in reference to heretics; cf. Newman, *Select Treatises* 2. 415.

<sup>241</sup> Ἕλληνες, Greeks—see above, n. 84.

<sup>242</sup> Obviously Athanasius was in Alexandria on this occasion.

<sup>243</sup> Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 4. 25, relates another incident, apparently

happening on Antony's way to Alexandria: 'It is said that earlier already, in the time of Valens, Antony had met this Didymus when he went down to Alexandria from the desert because of the Arians; and that when he perceived the intelligence of the man, he said to him: "Didymus, you must not let the loss of your physical eyes grieve you. After all, the eyes that you lack are such as also flies and gnats see with. You should rather rejoice that you have eyes with which angels see, eyes which serve the contemplation of God Himself and the reception of His light."'

The desert monk and scholar Didymus had lost his sight at the age of four (Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* 4 [2. 19 Butler]). Socrates, incidentally, must have erred in his chronology: this last journey of Antony to Alexandria very probably was made in 337 or 338 (see above, n. 236); Valens, born about 328, was appointed emperor of the East in 364; and at this latter date Antony was already dead, having passed away probably in 356 or 357. Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* 3. 15, who takes this story from Socrates, evidently noticed Socrates' error and dropped the reference to Valens.

<sup>244</sup> Γράμματα μὴ μαθὼν, lit. 'not having learned letters'—see also the following § 73: *ὅτι μὴ μεμάθηκε γράμματα*. As v. Hertling rightly remarks (see his long note, *op. cit.* 14 f.), this does not necessarily mean that he did not know how to read or write, but only that he had not received the rhetorical and humanistic training usual with sons of parents as comfortably situated as were Antony's. Yet, as Athanasius states at the beginning of this biography, Antony 'did not take to schooling,' and the context there may well be taken to indicate that he was rather successful in his desire to stay at home. Moreover, antiquity took the statement literally that he was unlettered; so, for example, Augustine in the prologue to the *De doctrina Christiana*. Regarding the fact that Athanasius (§ 81 below) and Jerome (*Vita S. Hilar.* 24) report that Antony exchanged letters with Constantine and other men in high position and corresponded with various monks, this does not prove that he could read and write: as he used interpreters in dealing with Greeks, so a fellow monk could assist him as reader and amanuensis. Cf. Bardenhewer 3. 80 f.; again, regarding the letters handed down under Antony's name, v. Hertling, *op. cit.* 56-70.

<sup>245</sup> Cassian, *Inst.* 5. 33 f., quotes the abbot Theodore, a master of Scripture interpretation, as saying that one who has a pure heart and, as a result, a clear mind, has all that is required for the under-

standing of the mysteries of Holy Scripture and has no need of laboring over commentaries.

<sup>246</sup> Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 4. 23, relates: "To the good Antony there came a philosopher of the day and said: "Father, how do you hold up deprived as you are of the solace of books?" Antony said: "My book, philosopher, is nature, and thus I can read God's language at will."'

<sup>247</sup> Lit. 'with divine salt': cf. Col. 4. 6 and Mark 9. 49.

<sup>248</sup> Attracted, no doubt, by the account of the other groups just mentioned.

<sup>249</sup> Cf. Athanasius, *De Incarn.* 53, where he eloquently describes the routing of the gods by the Cross and the acceptance of the crucified Savior by the pagans ('Greeks') who once jeered Him; cf. *ibid.* 1; *Cont. Ar.* 1. 43; Leo the Great, *Serm.* 70. 3; etc. To be God and to be crucified was a paradox which from the beginning was a stumbling block to the Jews and spelled sheer folly to the pagans (see 1 Cor. 1. 23). See Tertullian's defense (*Apol.* 16; *Ad nat.* 1. 12) against the notorious charge that Christians adore the Cross and an ass's head; so, too, Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 29. In this connection it is pointed out that the 'infamy of the Cross' must be understood from the fact that in the world empire of the Romans crucifixion was the most disgraceful form of capital punishment, one reserved for slaves, pirates, and thieves. But it is often overlooked that this penalty remained in force well into the fourth century, coexistent, therefore, with the rise and full development of Christianity from that Cross. The position of Christians explaining and defending their allegiance to it was not easy, and non-Christians could be in very good faith if they could not see rhyme or reason in such allegiance. See the very instructive introductory remarks by H. Leclercq in his article, 'Croix et Crucifix,' *DACL* 3. 2 (1914) 3045-8.

<sup>250</sup> See 2 Peter 1. 4.

<sup>251</sup> Here two well-known elements of ancient psychology are adverted to, the pre-existence and the transmigration (metempsychosis) of the soul. Within the Greek sphere of thought and religion this teaching is found particularly in Orphism, Pythagoras, Plato, the Gnostics, and Neo-Platonism. For the present passage Neo-Platonism as developed by Plotinus, a native of Egypt and pupil of Ammonius Saccas in Alexandria, seems to offer the material for Antony's (or Athanasius') polemic; see Plotinus, *Enn.* 1. 1. 12;



3. 4. 2, 5; 4. 3. 15; etc. Cf. R. Hedde, 'Métempsychose,' DTC 10. 2 (1929) 1574-95; P. O. Kristeller, *Der Begriff der Seele in der Ethik des Plotin* (Heidelb. Abh. z. Philos. u. ihrer Gesch. 19, Tübingen 1929).

<sup>252</sup> The word *παρουσία* is used here: 'presence,' 'arrival,' 'coming,'—first employed in a technical sense in the profane sphere to designate the official visit of a ruler or other high personage. It is found frequently in the New Testament, notably in the Epistles of St. Paul (e.g. 1 Cor. 15. 23; 1 Thess. 2. 19; 2 Thess. 2. 1), and is there employed as a standing term for the second coming of Christ at the Last Judgment. Early in the second century the term began to be used to refer also to the first coming of Christ in His Incarnation and Redemption (see Ignatius of Antioch, *Philad.* 9. 2; Justin Martyr, *Apol.* 1. 52. 3; etc.); quite certainly this second sense is intended in the present passage. Cf. J. Chaine, 'Parousie,' DTC 11. 2 (1932) 2043-54; J.-B. Colon, 'Paul (Saint): la parousie,' *ibid.* 2388-99; P. Gächter, 'Parusie,' LTK 7 (1935) 990-2.

<sup>253</sup> The third of Plotinus' Triad of Divine Principles, the 'World-Soul' ('All-Soul,' 'Soul of the All,' 'Cosmic Soul')—*Ψυχὴ*—from which the individual souls diverge or emanate. See W. R. Inge, *The Philosophy of Plotinus* (3rd ed. London 1929) 1. 200-64; E. Bréhier, *La philosophie de Plotin* (Paris 1928) 47-79; K. Prächter, *Die Philosophie des Altertums*, in F. Ueberweg, *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie* 1 (Berlin 1926) 603 f.

<sup>254</sup> That is, the Incarnation of the Son of God, the coming of Christ, just referred to.

<sup>255</sup> Also rendered the 'Intelligence' or 'Spirit'—the *Noûs*—the second of Plotinus' Triad of Divine Principles; see especially *Enn.* 5. 1. 3 and 7.

<sup>256</sup> See Plotinus, *Enn.* 4. 3. 12-17, 24. Antony-Athanasius do not distinguish between the All-Soul and the individual souls, though in the doctrine of Plotinus both remain united to a certain extent (see Inge, *op. cit.* 213-21).

<sup>257</sup> The First Principle of Plotinus' Divine Triad, also called the 'One,' the 'Absolute,' etc.—For the present section, see also J. M. Colleran's Introductions to St. Augustine's *De quantitate animae* and *De magistro*, in the preceding volume of the series—ACW 9. 9 and 118-20.

<sup>258</sup> See Athanasius' discourse on Christ's death on the Cross, *De Incarn.* 19-25.

<sup>259</sup> Egyptian tutelar divinities whose cult also spread to the Greeks and Romans. Isis' wanderings began when her husband, Osiris, was murdered by his plotting brother Typhon and cast into the Nile. She finally found the corpse, only to be forced into another long search when Typhon discovered the body, dismembered it into fourteen parts, and scattered these to the four winds. She recovered thirteen parts, buried them at Philoe. Osiris then inhabited the sacred bull Apis, and his wanderings took place from the death of one bull to the reappearance or reincarnation of Apis in another. Cf. Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 12 ff.; Athenagoras, *Leg.* 22; Firmicus Maternus, *De err. prof. rel.* 2; Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 18. 5 (where Osiris = Serapis); T. A. Brady, 'Isis' and 'Osiris,' *OCD* (1949) 459 f. and 628.

<sup>260</sup> Cronus (Saturn to the Romans) was one of the Titans. He rebelled against his father Uranus, mutilated him, and took the world dominion from him. In the course of time his father's curse was visited upon him. Fearing for his throne, he swallowed his own children as they were born—Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Hades, and Poseidon. Zeus alone escaped. When he had grown up, he forced his father to regurgitate his brothers and sisters, defeated him in the battle with the Titans, and banished him to Tartarus. Cf. the account in Hesiod, *Theog.* 164 ff., 453 ff., 666 ff.; also the sarcastic treatment of the myth by Tertullian, *Ad nat.* 2. 12; H. J. Rose, 'Kronos,' *OCD* (1949) 476.

<sup>261</sup> The frequent castigation by the early Christian writers of allegory as a rationalization of the ancient myths, shows how commonly it was resorted to as a last desperate effort to defend the pagan pantheon against unbelievers and scoffers. See Tatian 21. 6-9; Athenagoras, *Leg.* 22; Origen, *Cont. Cels.* 4. 38, 48; 5. 37; 6. 42; Ps.—Clement, *Recog.* 10. 29-36; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat.* 4. 115-7; Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 4. 10; 6. 8; and especially the acid critique by Arnobius, *Adv. nat.* 4. 32-45 (= ACW 8. 440-51). The allegorical treatment was applied particularly to Homer—cf. the work published in Greek by the Stoic Heraclitus (probably in the Augustan period): *Quaestiones Homericae*, also known as *Allegoriae Homericae*. On allegorization by the Stoics, cf. S. Angus, *The Religious Quests of the Graeco-Roman World* (New York 1929) 29.

<sup>262</sup> On the gods and goddesses mentioned here, see the articles by H. J. Rose in *OCD* 68 f. (Apollo), 104 f. (Artemis), 412 (Hephaestus), 412 f. (Hera), 666 (Persephone), 721 (Poseidon).

<sup>263</sup> Δημιουργός, lit. 'one who works for the people' = 'craftsman.' The word is used regularly by the Gnostics ('Demiurge': cf. Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.*, *passim*) for the creator of the universe. It is also found once in the New Testament (Heb. 11. 10) and in the Apostolic Fathers (Clement of Rome 20. 11; 26. 1; 33. 2; 59. 2; *Ad Diogn.* 7. 2; 8. 7) to designate the Christian *opifex mundi*. See the note by Newman, *Select Treatises* 2. 400 f.

<sup>264</sup> 'Religious truth' for τὸ μυστήριον of the text. The various meanings of this difficult term in the New Testament and in early Christian literature have evoked much profound study. The recent article by G. Bornkamm, TWNT 4 (1942) s.v., 809-34, also considers the use of the term in the late fourth century (832); where see also the recent literature.

<sup>265</sup> Literally, 'in the wisdom of Greek words'—see 1 Cor. 1. 17.

<sup>266</sup> The text: εἰς Ἑλληνισμὸν.

<sup>267</sup> The word used here, δεισιδαιμονία, which to the pagan mind usually meant 'due respect to the gods' or simply 'religion,' but to the Christian became synonymous with 'superstition,' is undoubtedly a reminiscence of the same term used by St. Paul in addressing the philosophers at Athens, Acts 17. 22: 'Men of Athens, wherever I look I find you *scrupulously religious*' (δεισιδαιμονεστέρους—trans. by Knox). Cf. the study of P. J. Koets, *Δεισιδαιμονία, A Contribution to the Knowledge of the Religious Terminology in Greek* (Purmerend 1929).

<sup>268</sup> With this and the following, compare *De Incarn.* 47; also Tertullian, *De idol.* 9; Ambrose, *Exam.* 4. 33.

<sup>269</sup> Cf. also *De Incarn.* 48. Among numerous similar passages in the writings of the Fathers, Tertullian's *Semen est sanguis Christianorum* (*Apol.* 50. 6) has come down as one of antiquity's most celebrated aphorisms (cf. J. E. B. Mayor, *Q. Septimi Florentis Tertulliani Apologeticus* [Cambridge 1917] 482 f.); and Tertullian himself, so tradition has it, owed his conversion from a pagan lawyer and profligate, to his observation of the Christian men and women martyred in the Roman amphitheatre.

<sup>270</sup> 1 Cor. 2. 4.

<sup>271</sup> Athanasius uses the imperfect *ἔγραφον*, implying repeated writing, as is also understood by Evagrius who adds the adverb *crebro*: they wrote to Antony 'repeatedly,' 'frequently.'

<sup>272</sup> See Heb. 1. 2.

<sup>273</sup> These rulers had assured Antony that they worshipped

(προσκυνῶσι) Christ. The emperors before Constantine had demanded worship for themselves. The refusal of emperor worship had been one of the main issues in the persecutions of the Christians. Here Antony reminds his imperial correspondents that they must not forget the Church's uncompromising position through the difficult times that lay behind: that all authority comes from God, that the one and true King and Emperor is Christ. Cf. the study by F. J. Dölger, 'Zur antiken und frühchristlichen Auffassung der Herrschergewalt von Gottes Gnaden,' *Ant. u. Christ.* 3 (1932) 117-127.

<sup>274</sup> See Dan. 4. 16.

<sup>275</sup> Serapion (or Sarapion) was a very common name in Egypt and in Egyptian monastic literature (Butler 2. 213 f.). The man mentioned here (see also below, § 91) had been superior of a colony of monks before he became bishop of Thmuis in Lower Egypt. Sozomen (*Hist. Eccl.* 4. 9) states that he was a man of extraordinary holiness and eloquence, and St. Jerome (*De vir. ill.* 99) speaks of his great learning. A friend of Athanasius, he suffered with him during the Arian disorders, was ousted from his see, for which he was known as 'confessor' in the orthodox Nicæan circles. He is also known for a work against the Manichaeans, and especially for his *Euchologium* or Sacramentary, a collection of thirty liturgical prayers, first published near the close of the last century and of capital importance for the history of the Church's early liturgy. Cf. Bardenhewer 3. 98-102; G. Bardy, 'Sérapion de Thmuis,' *DTC* 14. 2 (1941) 1908-12; for the *Euchologium*, J. Wordsworth, *Bishop Sarapion's Prayer-Book* (2nd ed. London 1923); also J. Quasten, *Monumenta eucharistica et liturgica vetustissima* (Bonn 1935) 49-67, with complete bibliography.

<sup>276</sup> For ἔνδον—cf. v. Hertling, op. cit. 75 n. 1.

<sup>277</sup> These troubles evidently were going on when St. Athanasius was composing the biography, for here he speaks of the 'present assault of the Arians.' The biography is now quite generally assumed to have been set down in the year 357, after Athanasius had escaped an attack on his life (*De fuga* 24 f.) in February of the year before and fled to the monks in Upper Egypt (cf. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat.* 21. 19). In the apology for his flight, *De fuga* 3 f., 6 f., he describes the cruelties and excesses practiced by the Arians when the Church and orthodoxy seemed doomed (also the orthodox bishops in the West, including Pope Liberius, had been

deposed and banished after the synods of Arles in 353 and Milan in 355). Cf. Athanasius, *Hist. Ar.* 31 ff.

<sup>278</sup> The comparison, here and somewhat earlier, of the Arians with mules seems quite illustrative of Antony's homespun and unvarnished appraisal of persons and things; but the parallel drawn is also consistent with Athanasius' trenchant opinions about the Arians (see above, nn. 235 and 240). Regarding the 'senselessness' of the Arians (*ἄλογία*, which can also mean 'want of respect'), see Card. Newman's excellent note, '*Ἀλογία, ἄλογος*,' *Select Treatises* 2. 364 f.; to quote his introductory remark: "This epithet is used by Athan. against the Arians, as if, by denying the eternity of the Logos (Reason or Word), first, they were denying the Intellectual nature of the Divine Essence; and, secondly, were forfeiting the source and channel of their own rational nature."

<sup>279</sup> Matt. 17. 20 (Greek).

<sup>280</sup> John 16. 23 f.

<sup>281</sup> Matt. 10. 8.

<sup>282</sup> Matt. 7. 2.

<sup>283</sup> *Δούξ*, from the Latin *dux* (English 'duke'): during the later Roman imperial times, a military commander in a province. This office was created by Diocletian to weaken the power of the prefects who up to that time had held the civil power as well as the command of the troops stationed in a province. Cf. O. Seeck, 'Dux,' RE 5 (1905) 1869-75; also the material in Du Cange, *Gloss. graec. s.v.*, 327 f. and App. 61.

<sup>284</sup> Balacius was military commander (*dux*) in the province of Egypt from 340-345. Cf. O. Seeck, 'Balakius,' RE 5 (1905) 2816. Athanasius repeats the story of his death in *Hist. Ar.* 14.

<sup>285</sup> Cf. Athanasius, *Hist. Ar.* 12.

<sup>286</sup> Nestorius was prefect from 345 to 352; cf. W. Ensslin, 'Nestorius' no. 2, RE 17 (1937) 137.

<sup>287</sup> A town in Lower Egypt, approximately seventeen miles south-east of Alexandria. It was the last station on the roads leading from Memphis and Pelusium over Andropolis to Alexandria. It is known today as El Kerium. Cf. K. Sethe, '*Χαιρέον (πόλις)*,' RE 3 (1899) 2030.

<sup>288</sup> See above, n. 86.

<sup>289</sup> A metaphor from anointing athletes for the games of the Greeks and Romans. See in the *Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis* 10. 7, the vision of Perpetua in which she sees herself rubbed with

oil in preparation for her contest with the Devil, here called the Egyptian.

<sup>290</sup> Cf. Matt. 27. 60 f.; Mark 15. 46.

<sup>291</sup> Christianity brought to Egypt a spiritualized view of the after-life, and, consequently, a decrease in concern for the body after death. Mummification, a practice which had sought the preservation of the body as a necessary partaker in the future life, was discontinued more and more. Cf. Mackean, *Christian Monasticism in Egypt* 58; H. Leclercq, 'Momie,' DACL 11. 2 (1934) 1744-52.

<sup>292</sup> The *Historia Lausiaca* (21) identifies these monks as Macarius and Amatas (cf. Butler's note, 2. 193 f.). See also Jerome, *Vita S. Pauli* 1, and *Chron. an.* 361.

<sup>293</sup> Probably 3 Kings 2. 2 is referred to (cf. also Jos. 23. 14), though Daniel actually says: 'I am going the way of all the earth' (πάσης τῆς γῆς).

<sup>294</sup> See above, § 19, where Antony explains in detail what 'dying daily' means. See also Jerome, *Epist.* 53. 10; 60.14; 127. 6.

<sup>295</sup> See above, § 68 f.

<sup>296</sup> Luke 16. 9.

<sup>297</sup> Jerome in his legendary life of Paul of Thebes relates (12) that when Antony at the age of ninety visited the senior solitary who was then one hundred and thirteen, Paul requested him to return to his own cell and fetch the cloak presented to him by Athanasius and to bury him in it.

<sup>298</sup> The grave was discovered in the year 561 and his body transferred to Alexandria. When the Saracens made themselves masters of Egypt in 635, the remains were brought to Constantinople. From there they came to France in the late tenth or early eleventh century, and since 1491 they have been kept in the Church of Saint Julien in Arles. Cf. R. Hindringer, 'Antonius, hl., Abt,' LTK 1 (1930) 514.

<sup>299</sup> See above, § 10; v. Hertling, *op. cit.* 88.

<sup>300</sup> See the Prologue.

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